

TO THE KING

with the Author's most humble Duty

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The Defects of Police

THE CAUSE OF IMMORALITY,

and the continual Robberies committed, particularly in and about the Metropolis :

WITH

Various Proposals

FOR PREVENTING HANGING AND TRANSPORTATION;

Likewise for the establishment of

Several Plans of Police

on a permanent basis, with respect to common beggars ; the regulation of paupers ; the peaceful security of subjects ; and the moral and political conduct of the people :

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE REV. MR. HETHERINGTON'S CHARITY;

and the most probable means of relieving the blind.

In Twenty-nine Letters to a Member of Parliament.

*And earthly power doth then shew likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice.*

SHAKESPEAR.

By JONAS HANWAY, Esq; K

L O N D O N :

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IN THE POLICE OF ENGLAND, AND THE
HOSPITAL, AND OTHER OFFICERS CONCERNED
CHARITIES, PARTICULARLY OF BRIDEWELL
OVERSEERS OF THE POOR, GOVERNORS OF
THE CLERGY, AND IN MAGISTRATES

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HOSPITAL, AND OTHER OFFICERS CONCERNED
IN THE POLICE OF ENGLAND, AND THE
PEOPLE WHO ARE INTERESTED TO SUPPORT
IT.

PERMIT me to make you an offering of my thoughts and observations, during the course of many years, in the tracks of *police*: With what truth and disinterested sincerity I have walked in this path, you will judge. — The favourable reception of the pamphlet I published in *March* 1772 (a), inspired me with a wish, for leisure to pursue the same ideas, with the experience of more years and further observation.

It is somewhat singular, that robberies have been lately committed in houses of my particular friends or acquaintance, to the number of at least half a dozen. For the knowledge of this, I am not obliged to news-paper intelligence; but it authorizes my belief of the various accounts communicated to the public. I have committed my thoughts on these events to writing, as they have arisen; not having time for any laboured arrangement of them. They are so many *proposals*

(a) Observations on the causes of the dissoluteness which reigns among the lower classes of the people. The propensity of some to petty larceny. The danger of gaming, concubinage, and an excessive fondness for amusement. With a proposal to render *Bridewell* of service to the police. — In 1767, I published 2 volumes 8vo. on the *Importance of the labouring poor*, &c. and at different times many Tracts in relation to Infants.

proposals formed into a quarto volume, the merits of which you will examine.

The large quotations from Mr. Potter's pamphlet, may be satisfactory to the enquirer, in some points which have not fallen so immediately within the compass of my reading and observation. Where my experience or opinion differs from that gentleman's, I give my sentiments with caution. Like him, I lay my foundation on the rock of religion, having every day fresh reason to believe, it is the only true basis of government; and that the national security and happiness, must decay with the neglect of it. How we stand in the comparative view with other countries, is not the question; but whether we have not reason, as men, subjects, and christians, to mourn over our omissions and commissions, in numerous instances with regard to police.

Let us look into the remotest antiquity, and we shall constantly find, that though the heathen nations were grossly superstitious, and ignorant of the one true God, they prospered only while they had an awful sense of the supreme power, which superintended all the affairs of men: Of this the most enlightened periods of the history of Rome and Greece afford abundant testimony. We shall not find any civilized state conducted without religion: The great Father of the poor, the Lord of Nature, cannot applaud, much less reward the conduct of any of us who are not faithful to our trust, as stewards in dispensing his tenderness and compassion for mankind. Whether it respects the bodies, or souls of our fellow-creatures, charity is the condition required of us.

Every impulse of the heart, and dictate of the understanding, calls on us for such regulations as will encourage the industrious; chastise the idle; instruct the ignorant; and punish the profligate: but how can the work be accomplished? Are we prepared for it? Are our parish workhouses in a proper state? No:—Are our prisons well calculated?—No:—Are our clergy so educated, and introduced into life, as to be themselves sufficiently awed by a sense of religion, to shew their commission in a proper light, and make the people commune with their

own hearts, and consider, if there is a God?—if the soul is immortal?—if God can delight in any thing but *Virtue*!

The complexion of our *police* will be *fair* in every feature: every lineament will receive some masterly stroke, expressive of that *tenderness* which characterizes our laws and government:—But when we apply the rule, shall we find ourselves more watchful of the common rights of humanity; more observant of the duties of subordination, and the respect due to superiors, than some nations whom we affect to despise? Whenever we neglect to curb That ferocity, which beats down the barriers of *decency*, we acknowledge ourselves so far under a worse government than *they* are.

When we investigate this object, it will appear, that it is not because we are free, that so many become reprobates, or that others are savage in behaviour: but being accustomed to such conduct, we forget what *freedom* means, and act with an *oppressive* or *servile insolence*. Freedom, rightly understood, makes men tender of each other. Can any thing soften the mind so much, as the freedom comprehended in our religion as *christians*? Whoever amongst the superior classes does not acknowledge himself obliged to his *religion* for his manners, gives us reason to think, he disavows the thing itself: and what consequence will this have on the minds of the common people? I have every where insisted, that the detail of government, or call it *police*, depends on religion.—Were the *parochial* clergy to exert themselves in a more pious, zealous, and judicious manner, should we not soon see the effect? We should discover that there is no other means for a *young* man, or an *old* one, to *cleanse* his ways, than by ruling himself after the word of God; and that whenever he goeth wrong, out of the commandments, it is because he has not been duly taught to *bide* them in his heart: He who knows not the blessedness of learning the judgments of God, must be supposed unhappy in his teachers. To have more delight in the testimonies which the Almighty hath given of himself, in the revelation of his will, than in *great riches*, can come only from being early trained to a belief and practice of That law, by which men, as

intelligent and accountable beings, discern the excellency of religion, and that they must ultimately stand or fall by it.

If the *parochial clergy* will open the eyes of their *parishioners* to behold the “wonderous things” of the divine law, the people will not be so *confounded* in their pursuits. Instead of being, as the Psalmist expresses it with much energy, “*curst* by *erring* from the commandments,” they will talk of them with *delight*. Their souls will not *melt* away under the *heaviness* which their sins create: but their hearts will be set at liberty, to run the way of the commandments of God. Their eyes will be turned from *falsehood* and *covetousness*; the love of *truth* will shew itself in the actions of their lives; and with benevolence of heart they will rejoice in the God of their salvation!

This is the important business for which our *clergy* have been appointed, through a succession of ages, from the *era* of our blessed Lord, down to this day. According to the language of the royal Pietist, let “the *proud* have them in derision, yet should they not shrink from their duty, but remembering the everlasting judgments of God, receive the comfort” which will flow from it. Where is the clergyman supporting his dignity, and acting with judgment and candour, tenderness and compassion to the souls of men, who will not find a *blessing* in his temporal concerns? If he will truly occupy himself in the commandments of his great Master, and never cease to ask such assistance from his superiors in *temporals*, as true zeal may prompt him to seek, he will much oftener find it, than himself imagines. His words might really be sweet to the *heart*, as *honey* to the mouth: The people by wholesome lessons might get understanding, and *bate* such evil ways as they now pursue with so much eagerness.

This is confessedly a work which requires time and patience. Many of the clergy may say, “It is, indeed, a glorious *enterprize*, but who in this perturbed state of morals can execute it?” If every man of the profession will knock at the door of his own breast, and enquire in what he is deficient; and at the same time struggle to obtain the victory, he will find the contest every day less arduous: he will discover
that

that the moral conduct of the people depends on religion; and that the peace and harmony of society flow from the same cause. The clergy are "*sworn*, and, at all events, should be *steadfastly* purposed to keep the righteous judgments of That God who is supreme over all!"

Though I expatiate so largely on this obligation to society, I do not conclude, that our national philanthropy is exhausted. I see a church empty, or an opera-house crowded; a street lined with beggars, and a table covered with splendor and profusion; I do not therefore conclude, that we forget all religious and social duties; but I am sure *dissipation* and *extravagance* are injurious to every thing great and manly; and that *fashion* often militates against the true happiness of one part of the people, and the piety and comfort of the other: that without *energy* in government to enforce, no well-digested *police* can be established; and that it will never be obtained, unless it is *paid for*.

In a country pretending to the highest degree of civilization, and the enjoyment of liberty in its purest state, there must be an uniformity run through the whole; and our *customs* must harmonize with our *laws*, or we attempt to make the *leopard change his spots*. To say that we are a *free nation*, but not *sufficiently* mindful of the state of the lower classes of the people, is a contradiction. To boast of our *commerce*, and see so many idle: to behold great splendor on one side, and extreme poverty on the other: to triumph in the purity of our *religion*, and see such vast crowds ignorant and immoral, totally absenting themselves from the worship of God:—these must be convincing proofs to our own minds, that in the general view, we are not the people we fondly imagine ourselves to be! Let the *defects* be found, wherever they exist, and let us mend; and then exult in the purity of our intentions. If the higher ranks, according to their stations, see and comprehend what such defects consist in; and provide for the cultivation of the manners and morals of the people, we may *rise* to the height we aspire at; and till then we shall *droop*.

To rectify such evils as have come within the reach of my knowledge, I have endeavoured to mark some great outlines of a plan of *police*,

upon a principle of *mercy* to human nature in distress; and *justice* to the community, of which I am a member. I have suggested several *modes of enquiry* into the state of *hospitals*, *workhouses*, and *prisons*, and their *economy*; from whence I presume it may be learnt, what the *evils* are, and what the *remedies* may be. I do not imagine, but that many of the particulars are well known to some persons, notwithstanding which, the reader seeing them in a collected view, will be induced to lend so much the greater aid and assistance.

The preservation of the lives of *fellow-subjects* (a), has constituted a considerable part of my study for some years; intending, at

(a) Whilst I am writing, I have found it necessary to collect an account of the mortality of paupers in a certain parish. In 1762 to 1766 inclusive, compared with 1767 to 1773, I find the difference in the deaths of infants to be 53 per cent. viz.

	Under 2 Years.		Above 2 Years.		Died.	
	1762	65	46	19	27	
	1763	98	80	18	58	
	1764	101	92	9	66	
	1765	140	117	23	89	
	1766	127	97	30	82	
		531	432	99	322	

Computing the mortality on the 531, it is per cent. $60\frac{1}{2}$

The same on the 432, it is nearly per cent. $74\frac{1}{2}$

The 99 are supposed to have been grown children, or delivered to parents, or otherwise disposed of.—As to rearing of infants, in those days, it was hardly done by any workhouse. On viewing the next seven years, they stands thus:

	Under 2 Years.		Above 2 Years.		Died.	
	1767	156	34	122	11	
	1768	180	50	130	17	
	1769	227	70	157	30	
	1770	236	66	170	13	
	1771	268	69	199	19	
	1772	367	77	290	28	
	1773	369	60	309	18	
		1803	426	1377	136	

at the same time that I gratified my humanity, and exercised myself in the offices of charity, to promote the welfare of my country. If

If we reckon the mortality on the 1803, it is *per cent.* only $7\frac{1}{2}$

If on the 426, nearly *per cent.* 32

But it must be observed, that many of the 1377 were from 2 to six years old.

With regard to *adults*, the numbers stand thus:

From 1762 to 1766 inclusive, received 2149, dead 1015, *per cent.* near $47\frac{1}{2}$

From 1767 to 1773 of - - - 2230, died 654, *per cent.* near $29\frac{1}{2}$

The common annual rate of mortality, is about 1 in 30, or *per cent.* 3

If we call it 5, and give 10 more for age, the common mortality in a crowded workhouse is more formidable! But still we see how the best government exceeds the *worst* by 18 in 100: And we may judge how the ordinary vitality in a pure air, exceeds the fetid, confined air of a workhouse.

We may also learn, that with *all inconveniences*, the difference under different officers, exhibits a very striking contrast. And as to the advantage of the act of parliament respecting infants, which commenced in 1767, can there be a stronger evidence than this before us?—It still requires a vigilant inspection, that the lives of infants be not squandered.

A contest, who should be *governors and directors*, founded on an increase of debt, and poor-rates, gave rise to this computation: and I find, that 18 in 100 grown persons, were preserved from the grave, by those who spent the most money. *Oeconomy* must be preserved; but it is *secondary* to life.

The saving of $42\frac{1}{2}$ per 100 infants under 2 years old, is an object of great importance, and not less of $53\frac{3}{10}$ in 100 children past 2 years of age, viz. the difference of $7\frac{1}{2}$ and $60\frac{4}{5}$.

It may however be hoped, the act of parliament will hereafter secure the lives of infants, as this requires a certain pay to nurses in the country, till they reach the age of six years.

To prevent any unnecessary charge, which can possibly be saved, must be by adhering strictly to new regulations, and try their effects, viz.

1. Suppose a certain allowance for the expence of each pauper, is not to be exceeded on any consideration.
2. The difference in the price of provisions in one year and another, will generally prove of no consideration in the estimate.
3. In the execution of this design, great care must be taken to do no injustice to the adults, that if they cry out, as if they were cruelly treated, the overseers and governors may be able to justify themselves.
4. The great object is *humanity towards the paupers*; in which I include a proper regard to their instruction in the duties of religion and industry.
5. The paupers, without exception, ought to be kept cleanly, and enjoy sweet air to breathe: and, as common prudence requires, they must have room to work.
6. To prevent their being crowded, a resolution for a limitation of number to be received into the workhouse, must, I apprehend, take place.

we do not prevent penury among one part of our fellow-subjects, and injustice and violence in another, the elegant or magnificent building, the

7. *Industry* comes in the next place; and it is to be presumed, that four in five of the paupers turned of six years old, and not exceeding threescore, can do something towards their maintenance.

8. The virtuous parishioner adult, come to decay by the loss of his children, relations, and friends, who might relieve him, on one side; and on the other, children yet very young, and losing their parents: these must be considered in the first place, and treated with tenderness.

9. Others of a different quality, require a more skilful management. To make the practice correspond with the theory of oeconomy, it seems necessary, that such be kept in a separate house, upon a small allowance: their support to depend partly on labour by compulsion.

10. For instance: If the food and raiment of a pauper in the workhouse, including cloathing, coals, and candles, is limited not to exceed four-pence-halfpenny, or five-pence a-day; the pauper in the separate house, may be allowed but two-pence for food, and what further he can gain by labour.

11. In return for the two-pence, he is to suffer confinement: he is not to be permitted to go abroad, to beg. Under such a situation, many will disdain the allowance, and seek a support by their own hands out of confinement, instead of being useless drones in a workhouse.

12. This proposal may, at first view, seem to be too rigid a discipline, though in effect it may prove charity towards those who are taxed, who often live at a less charge than paupers usually make.

To execute this plan will, as I have observed, require resolution, as well as an accurate distinction of objects.—It will require space, which must be paid for;—and cleanliness, which they must furnish with their own hands. There should be black-holes for the refractory; for they cannot be turned out merely because they are ungovernable.

13. In order to facilitate the execution, half their allowance should be spent, viz. one penny in providing them with a warm mess for their dinner every day. This may be accomplished with much ease (see note p. 120.) The pauper who disdains such food, must be considered as ignorant, prejudiced, and unworthy of charity; or profligate, and an object of the rod of the magistrate.—I have been insulted by a pauper, for talking of *ox-cheek* as proper food. Such is the ignorance, as well as arrogance of some of the poor.

14. In order to the execution of this design of parochial parsimony, and the suppression of idleness, the produce of the pauper's industry must be sold immediately, or the value of it allowed, that justice may be done him.

15. In this view, if they will not work, they will have only a dinner.

16. Some money may possibly be saved, on the weekly allowances paid to out-pensioners, if any such are found to be improper objects of such relief.

17. Why an overseer should be allowed to give any money away, except what the law requires with *passes*, or at the weekly boards of governors, is worthy of enquiry.

Under

the redundance of conveniences; the smooth face of plenty, and the smiles of commerce, will not avail: we must cultivate a better digested

Under the present undisciplined state of the refractory poor, time may be necessary to accomplish such an œconomy; but it is surely in the nature of things very practicable. He is a *malefactor* who can work and will not; and there are very few malefactors who have a pint of excellent soup provided for them every day, with four ounces or more, when boiled, of good nourishing animal substance. I would give them this in lieu of a penny. The other penny should be laid out in bread.—But nothing can be done without discipline; making a separation of the unfortunate and genuine pauper, from the *idle* and *profligate*. If the latter presume on a *right of maintenance*, derived from the poor's laws, whether they work or not, they should be put to *hard commons*. This line of distinction being drawn, it might give a new turn to the thoughts and expectations of many, and keep them at work in their several callings. Something of this kind may be tried for the relief of the parish, and for the purpose of promoting the cause of industry. Perchance a *draught* may be made of some of the *aged*: I made acquaintance the other day with a man of 76 years old, who earns 10s. 6d. a week by labour, and wished he might die, when he could work no longer.

I observe, by the *minutes of the House of Commons*, a number of *resolutions* relating to paupers. I presume they have been well considered, as remedies of the evils complained of. One of them, I apprehend to be in point, in the present case, viz.

18. That all accounts be made up and discharged quarterly.

I shall be asked, how is this to be done by the parish which is in debt? The answer is, that a parish plunges the deeper by *not paying*.—It is supposed that the parish rate will allow of some *saving* every quarter, or how is it ever to pay a debt? It will certainly buy so much the cheaper, and be so much the less distressed by duns.

19. The common sense of the parishioners, knowing their circumstances, will be induced to pay their quarter's rate on demand, a few days before it is due, in order that the overseers may be in cash for the payment at the end of the quarter.

20. Let the accounts of the four overseers, the gross sums at least of their respective receipts and disbursements, be brought into *one* cash book, debtor for the receipts, and creditor for the payments, to be produced at the end of every quarter.

Thus every governor and director, may govern and direct. If these are kept in ignorance, during the whole year, how the account really stands, it is hardly to be expected any regular œconomy can be observed; or that it is possible to avoid being at the mercy of overseers, or of some particular person who takes the lead.—It is with a parish as with a private man; if he makes up his accounts only at the end of the year, he may be involved in a heavy debt, of which he had no apprehension.

I have observed for some years past, that much evil arises from being in arrears; and this from the want of method. When *overseers* are really attentive, and as able as they are vigilant, like the "eye of the master, they make the ox fat:" but vigilance alone will not do; there must be such exact order in accounts, that any one who will look into them, may see the justness of them at one glance, viz.

gested *police*; we must be resolute in probing the wound, or many of the inferior people will languish in a political consumption. Life, at best,

21. Whether the quantities of food are agreeable to the allowances made.
22. The same of the raiment, as nearly as possible, at least what it amounts to, computed on each pauper.
23. What the coals cost, and how many fives are supplied.
24. What quantity of candles come in, and how they are expended.
25. What the groceries amount to, and how issued.
26. What the article of medicines is, and the average number of sick who use them.
27. What the wages amount to, and to whom paid.
28. What the taxes are, and to whom paid.

Every material article having its distinct head, it may be seen what they cost the parish; and how it comes out a-head on each pauper: for this purpose it is very obvious, that a separate account of each article is *necessary*. The additions of the weights, from the daily receipts, being seen, every person conversant in figures may find how it corresponds with the number of paupers, and the quantities allowed to each.

29. The same method should be observed by a distinct account of the out-pensioners, their names and weekly pay, ranged in a proper order, to render the *pay* perspicuous.

30. There should be also a separate and distinct account of the monies paid by the overseers to the casual poor, as far as the overseers are permitted to give away any money.

31. The weekly payment of the country nurses must also appear. This is a capital article of expence indispensibly necessary.

Thus the expence may be known for the satisfaction of every *parishioner* who pays poor-rates. Whether such rates be high or low, they may behold the oeconomy observed.

32. The objection, that the paupers are continually admitted and discharged, and therefore their numbers cannot be ascertained with exactness, is of no weight. Those who have occasional leave to go out, will more than make up for such defect. The *waste* that may happen upon any article, if a stock should be laid in, it must be seen what it is. I am speaking now as a purser, or storekeeper, and not supposing any thing *wasted*, in the sense a parishioner may possibly comprehend.

33. To compute the average number, the paupers of every day being added, and the total divided by seven, the weekly number will appear. From weeks we go to *lunar months*, though the quarterly payments will be for three kalendar months.

But how is any such thing to be performed without a *proper resident officer*, who writes a fair hand, is a real accomptant, and devoted entirely to such oeconomy. This officer may be called, according to the common name given, viz. *governor*, or head over the work-house; the master, who is a distinct officer, doing the drudgery, in dispensing the food and raiment, preventing disorders, promoting labour, cleanliness, and good discipline.—The governor becoming an adept in his business, acts as a secretary to a public office. He will be, in effect, a perpetual overseer, though subservient to the *annual officers*.

best, is in many respects vexatious, of which every man of feeling is sensible. Let the *worst* man living learn, that there are such things in nature as *justice* and *mercy*; and that *man* depends on both, with respect to both worlds.

It seems necessary to consider these cities in a distinct view, and to incorporate several acts relating to them into one; that the people may know the law which is good and proper for one parish on the same spot, can hardly be improper for another. Some principal parishes may remain with their particular powers; but the fewer laws there are, the more happy will the community be.

The consideration of the *change* of such *parish* annual officers, points out the superior regulation and economy of the houses of industry.

34. The governor so appointed, should be able to give an answer to every such *reasonable* enquiry as may be made by any parishioner.

As it now generally happens, either the overseers themselves are no accountants, or changing office annually, no regular plan is, or can be followed. Where there is no such governor, there will be no such account: Hence jealousies and fears perpetually arise. Gentlemen will not act. Tradesmen alone are often suspected of being *interested*; and many are so from the very nature of their traffic, granting they have as much honesty, as the ordinary race of men possess. An incumbrance of debt often follows; or if the *money* is saved, *lives* are squandered away. One often sees such scenes of inhumanity practised in workhouses, as blushens the face of common modesty.

Thus it appears to me from experimental knowledge, that in every workhouse where there is any considerable number of *paupers*, especially when they reach to two hundred, or more, there must be a good *accountant*, or great disorder.

With regard to *treasurership*, I have observed, that at the end of a quarter, accounts should be brought in and paid; it should appear in one collected view, in *one cash book*, *debtor* and *creditor*, what is *received*, and what is *paid*. If any thing is left unpaid, it should at the same time appear on record, as a list of debts out standing, at the end of the quarter.

This seems to be the only way to do justice to the parish; content the *parishioners*; shew them how the *rate* corresponds with the *exigencies* of the parish; and how the money is expended. Till such order is observed, there can be no possibility of giving such an account as every parishioner has a right to demand.

The great object of my speculation, as a means of accomplishing the important enterprize proposed, is the building proper prisons. They are wanted in almost every part of the kingdom. Change of circumstances and manners, make a change in the custom of our forefathers necessary.—Improvement must run through.—Some improvements in grandeur and convenience tend to hurt morals; and if none are made subservient to the correction of them, *trade alone will not answer*: we shall run retrograde to the great ends of government.

It is upon this principle I found the doctrine of *separation* under imprisonment, whether for great crimes, or little ones, before trials, or as punishments after them. In pursuit of this object I would spare no cost: I would be intimidated by no difficulties: I would comply with no custom pregnant with mischief to society. Our present mode of imprisonment is confessedly a friend only to the gallows. We see the deadly consequences of it; yet we sleep on the verge of the precipice, and behold numbers of our fellow-subjects fall, and dash themselves to pieces. That the judges and justices of this land, the legislative power, composed of so many hundred persons of the highest rank and fortune, so deeply interested in the morality of the people, should desire to go on in so high a road to the perdition of fellow-subjects, and hazard the whole fabric of government, is not credible!

It requires time to deliberate on the change of customs: but every day's experience proves the punishments we now inflict have lost their effect: something new must be devised. It seems to be universally acknowledged, that the safest way to preserve a prisoner from being infected by the poisoned breath of companions in wickedness, and to drag him from his evil courses, is to deprive him of all possibility of evil communication. Let us try then what *can* be done; what we are morally certain *will* be done, by the humane rigour of *solitary imprisonment* and labour, as a punishment fit to restore delinquents to creditable and useful life. Let us convince the world that we believe man is a *free agent*: let us prove that the *will* is the instrument of his freedom—and that this depends, in a great measure, on the objects which the accidents of his life throws in his way. This is a doctrine as true, as that it may be carried beyond truth.

The great object of my speculation, as a means of accomplishing the truth. The prayer we address to the great Parent of mankind is, that we may not be led, or fall into the ways of temptation; implying, that we ought to deliver others from it, not expose them to it, by evil communication. If this be true, what are we about?

I have proposed a beginning to be made in *Middlesex*, where there is the most extravagance, and the most plunder. If the evil arises from a deficiency in the care and vigilance, the prudence and piety of those who are spoiled, as well as in the criminality of the *spoilers*; and for the same reason that coercive power is necessary to do good; where is our *policy* or *compassion*, when we do not make laws to keep criminals separate and provide prisons for that purpose? Is the reason only in the expence of ground, stone, brick and mortar? *After-ages* will not believe it possible, that a nation really rich, to say nothing of the redundancy of our splendid appearance, could look on and suffer so capital an evil, for the sake of a charge so inconsiderable, upon a view of the numerous expences created by the very sufferings we mean to remove! Whether the object could be completed for 50, or not less than 100,000*l.* is not material, in the light we ought to see it. The building must be well contrived, very strong, and durable; and should be formed upon a plan that will do honour to our national humanity and religion. It is no less evident, that to accomplish such a work, requires resolution, and an enlarged mind, as well as a considerable sum for building; skill in the contrivance of a proper edifice, and its appurtenances; a convenient *site*, and such *regulations* as may render the event prosperous. And what is all this, as a "*deed of peace*," to a nation so capable of conducting fleets and armies, and extending conquest over the globe? Shall we not perform so little a work, to guard our *own doors*? And, if I may use the expression on this occasion, *keep our beds from violation*? Shall daring villains, with *thievish* or with *murderous* hands, assault us in the dead of night; and shall we neglect the rational means of their correction?

I have not drawn the sword of justice, without feeling the pangs of commiseration, even for him who aims his dagger at my throat; but I would not yield up the trophies which my country has gained, and fervilely submit to see it become a prey to felons!

In treating of *prisons*, we ought not to forget the intermediate humane imprisonment, which the laws have provided in cases of *debt*, not to hurry a prisoner to a common jail. Under the authority of the sheriff's officer, many a prisoner taken into custody, is conveyed to a *spunging-house*; not originally intended to suck up the blood of the unhappy; though by a horrible abuse of mercy, the prisoner is even robbed by extortion, and the temptation afforded of purchasing humane treatment, by plunging so much deeper in debt. Of this I have lately seen an instance, in the person of a young woman, whose health could not bear a pint of ale, charged with eight shillings a day in strong liquor:—So much was actually charged to her, and she was detained till the spunging house bill, amounting, in *three days time*, to half as much as the debt, was also paid!—This is an article of *police*, worthy of legislative enquiry, that as far as possible, such enormities may be restrained, without involving sufferers in worse evils.

Prisons is the word: we are in great want of such as are proper, in most parts of this kingdom. *Newgate* is nearly rebuilt (*a*), upon the old *pernicious*

(*a*) Since writing these pages, I have been to visit the *New Newgate*, and found it built as it has been represented, upon the common principle, of a great number being put into one ward; a *press yard*, for all kinds of prisoners to assemble in, in the day time; and a *tap-house*, where they may get drunk every day, if they have money enough to pay for the liquor. I forgot to enquire about *dungeons*: I suppose there are some. They also mean to make half a dozen private cells, by partitions, in one of the wards. These will be miserable holes for any clergyman to attend in; and by no means consistent with the design of preparing a man for death. There will be some light: I fear not enough for the prisoner to see to read: and these cabins are so contrived, that one prisoner will hear another. Provision is made for ventilation, by apertures in the walls. There are a few rooms for persons of a superior condition. The plan of preventing exterior communication, by keeping prisoners within a court-yard, is confessedly calculated for security: this seems to be the only object of our prisons, which are admirably calculated to promote those acquaintances and communications, which undoubtedly militate against the great purpose for which men are imprisoned. This *Newgate* might have been carried much higher, and the wards received so much light and air, as to have made the *press-yard associations* unnecessary; and yet the prison rendered secure to all intents and purposes; especially if an apartment were provided for an under-keeper to sleep in, contiguous to the wards. Much might have been done, had the principle proceeded on, been right. The thing will yet admit of alteration. There is a foundation laid for more building, in which, I hope, for the sake of God, and our reputation for common-sense, we shall not go on plunging in so *irreligious, inhuman, and impolitic* a custom, as the communication of prisoners.

pernicious plan, of suffering the prisoners to associate. The New Prison, Clerkenwell, is building in the same manner, not including half space enough. A prison is to be built at Hertford: I hope ground sufficient will be allowed for it; and that it will be such as may do honour to the gentlemen of the county: and though it should require more time in building, and a greater expence than they originally intended, they will do ill to hand their names down to posterity with disgrace, when reverence and gratitude might be their due. It need not be on half so large a scale as *Middlesex* requires. I presume this might comprehend room for the first commitment, and for punishment in solitude.

I write with freedom on the inefficacious method of proceeding in *Bridewell-Hospital*. I appeal to the candid governors of it, if either justice or mercy is exercised there, with any propriety, to answer the great ends of *police*? If in the course of ten years, they can produce ten young women, or as many men, reformed or made good subjects by *their* means, it is more than I apprehend can be done. And if this should be the case, granting that the name of *Bridewell* carries with it some terror, no man in his senses will pretend that a foundation so necessary, and of such importance in its original intention, is answered; or that the governors of it do the duty they undertake.

Whilst I am contemplating these things, accounts of the works of the city hospitals (a) are laid before me. We must do justice to the

(a) The report of the state of the city hospitals read before the governors:

St. BARTHOLOMEW'S.

Cured and discharged from this hospital	—	—	—	4182
Out-patients relieved with advice and medicines	—	—	—	4178
Buried this year	—	—	—	163
Remaining under cure	—	—	—	422
Out-patients	—	—	—	250
				9195

808 ————— St.

the spirit of charity which reigns so powerful amongst us, whatever base alloy it may be mixed with.—“ Good God, look down with mercy, for the sake of those beings (a), who, by the various events of human life, have been deprived of their reason, and by the instrumentality of those who have enjoyed this blessing, regained it!”—212 patients admitted—184 cured, and 268 remaining! How many of the latter may prove incurable, is not said.—We have also a striking instance in the reports of the proceedings of the city hospitals, *St. Bartholomew's* and *St. Thomas's* having cured and relieved 15538 patients.—I also find 808 *vagrants, &c. relieved and discharged by Bridewell-Hospital (b)*. What is meant by *relief*, in the last case, is not explained. The number of 808 is considerable; but the quality of the relief, and the good done them

St. THOMAS'S.

Cured and discharged from this hospital	—	—	—	7178
Buried this year	—	—	—	220
Remaining under cure	—	—	—	475
Out-patients	—	—	—	230
				8103

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.

Children put forth apprentices, and discharged out of this hospital last year,				
ten of whom were instructed in the mathematics	—	—	—	139
Buried last year	—	—	—	7
Remaining in the hospital	—	—	—	1108
				1254

(a) BETHLEM HOSPITAL.

Admitted into this hospital	—	—	—	212
Cured	—	—	—	184
Buried	—	—	—	21
Remaining under cure	—	—	—	268
				685

(b) BRIDEWELL HOSPITAL.

Vagrants, &c. relieved and discharged	—	—	—	808
Maintained in several trades	—	—	—	42

them, cannot be judged of from this report. What I have said upon the subject of making That hospital tributary to our *police*, in a much more honourable degree than later times can boast of, must stand or fall upon the clear evidence of *facts*.—I hope it will challenge the attention, not of the public in general only, but in particular of its own governors, to whose candour and discernment this matter may perchance be ultimately referred. If *they* cannot discover how insignificant their present conduct is, nor how useful and beneficent it might be: or discovering, have not *resolution* or probity to *correct* it: or if they want powers, and *will not* ask for them: in any of these circumstances, the legislature must sooner or later interpose its authority. *Negligence in such concerns grieves the heart*. He who *sees* and *feels* the evils of life, has only this satisfaction, that he will leave the world to those who will *mend* it;—or, act the same part as others have done before, till the false treatment of the body politic, brings on the same decay, as is produced by the individual in the mismanagement of health; and at length a *strict regimen* must be pursued, or the patient will *die*! (a)

This being the season for making up the account, the *Worshipful Company of Parish Clerks* have obliged me with their usual annual present of half a dozen copies of the *abstract* of the registers of the infant poor, of the 147 parishes in these cities, included in the act of the 7th of his present Majesty. As a regulation of *salutary police*, I have had frequent occasion of mentioning it: and it is very obvious, from this state (b), that 5090 children, are of four years old and upwards; half of them I compute between

(a) The *arts-masters apprentices* are at this time not above half their usual number; as if the governors meant to make a total reduction.

(b) By this I find the year 1774 stands as follows:

Number transferred from 1773	—	—	—	—	3515
Born in the workhouses in 1774	—	—	—	—	659
Received more into the workhouses or parish houses in 1774	—	—	—	—	3122
					7296
Viz. Of Foundlings received in 1774	—	—	—	—	114
Illegitimate	—	—	—	—	796
Casual	—	—	—	—	177
Legitimate	—	—	—	—	6209
Of whom are of the ages from 4 to 14	—	—	—	—	5090

Many are lavish of their accusations of overlets of the parochial between 8 and 12. Only 594 being put out apprentices in one year, and 3515 transferred from 1773 to 1774: and the last year now producing a total of 7206 of these children of the public, for so they may be called, the public has so much riches, or such a millstone about its neck, just as it is managed. Great benefit will accrue by such numbers of working poor; or they will be vagabonds and paupers, to eat the bread of idleness. These poor children call for a peculiar regard.

It is the fate of our parochial concerns, *to be ill managed*. The guardians of the infant parish poor are to be five in each parish, noblemen or gentlemen, distinguished for their rank, under the honourable condition of a triennial election: they are generally negligent of their duty, and probably will remain so till their eyes are opened by some prosecution; for though the fine is only 5*l.* to each, the same is extended to the vicar, churchwardens, overseers, &c.: and if it shall appear that, in defiance of the act, the infants are not removed, but die in consequence of being kept in the workhouse beyond the time limited, it may be tried if the murdering of helpless infants in this way, be only a fine of 5*l.*—If the poor's rates were levied according to the extent of their fortunes, who lavish large sums in idleness, we should never want a supply sufficient for every good and necessary purpose relating to the poor: but the ignorance and contempt of salutary police, which one often finds, in these days, cannot be cured by wealth alone: All the indulgence that plenty can bestow, frequently serves only to give strength to perverseness. Precepts, example, and the terror of laws, must come in aid, and exert their force to subdue the evils as they rise: but for the same reason that these have such wonderful effects on the social nature of man, when the example is evil, it renders wickedness more wicked, and draws with the cords of iniquity.

Many

The 97 parishes within the walls	—	—	—	151
Of whom are illegitimate near a third	—	—	—	52
17 parishes without the walls	—	—	—	1628
Of whom are illegitimate, near an eighth	—	—	—	200
23 parishes in Middlesex and Surry	—	—	—	3447
Of whom are illegitimate, near a fourteenth	—	—	—	241
10 parishes in Westminster	—	—	—	2070
Of whom are illegitimate, near a seventh	—	—	—	303

Many are lavish of their accusations of overseers of the parochial poor; but how can they condemn others, whilst themselves are so ommissive in their duty, as totally to decline the office? If they will be neither overseer, nor justice of the peace, nor in any sense an inspector into scenes of human misery, agreeable to their rank and fortune, as stewards to a bountiful profusion of blessings; I see not how they can, with any countenance, condemn their neighbours, though these should execute their duty imperfectly. A writer (a) of eminence on the parish laws, finds great fault with them; and it is most certain, they have been, in many respects, so deficient, that one law has in vain followed upon the back of another: he expresses himself thus: "These laws may be compared to the apparel of the poor. Where a flaw is observed, a patch is provided for it: upon that another; and so on, till the original coat is lost amidst a variety of *patch-work*: and more labour and materials are expended, than would make an entire new suit." This may be true; but where to find materials for such new suit, is a question of some difficulty. Experience every day proves, that the luxurious indulgences of one part of the people, occasions the idleness of the other. And as extravagance creates poverty, the consideration of *expence* absorbs our finer sentiments of *humanity* and *patriotism*. The care of the *health* of the poor; attention to their *cleanliness*; the quality and quantity of their *food* and *raiment*; the promotion of their *industry*, and a religious regard to their *piety*; these often give place to the *plea of want*, created by a false mode of living, shameful to a nation. In proportion as our *police* is disgraced by the numbers we behold in a filthy starving condition, complaining of their misery, in our streets; whether it be most their fault or their misfortune; whether *their* complaints be well or ill founded, our *disgrace* is manifest.

I have spread my table with food of *various kinds*, not aspiring at *dainties*, but such as may nourish and produce health and vigour: yet I mean to excite the curiosity of some of the highest condition, that they may find something to *their taste*. The politician and divine, the

(a) Doctor Burn.

magistrate and minister of state, are equally concerned to partake of it ; and all men thirst after peace, or at least wish for freedom from anxiety.

The word *police* is not universally intelligible, so little have we attended to it ; and consequently we must expect that many *proposals* for it will be treated as *utopian* or *romantic*, tho' they may be salutary and necessary regulations. If the people are not kept in good order, and just apprehensions of what they owe to themselves, to God, and their country, no event ought to surprize us. For my own part, when I consider how lame and deficient our *police* is, I wonder things are not in a worse state than they really are.

Since writing my letters with relation to the proposed improvement of the *London Workhouse* (a), and the building a General Workhouse in *Westminster* (b), I have the pleasure to find that the object has been taken up in parliament upon a liberal and princely plan ; it being proposed to have *three houses of industry*, one for *London*, one for *Westminster*, and a third for *Middlesex*, the execution of which may effectually answer the purpose of the *two objects* I recommended. I hope this design will take place, and that it will keep our streets clear of beggars, and in some measure operate as a *prevention* against *thieves* and *robbers*, and petty delinquents : but I cannot say I apprehend these alone will be effectual in correcting the daring spirit which brings so many to an untimely end, or banishes them by transportation, so as to become dead to their country. Whatever is *ordered* to be done, the success will depend on the *due execution* of it.—

The *best digested plan* must be guarded : We sometimes see the warmest piety become injurious to salutary *police*. The great benefit of conjugal engagements is, that the man and woman may be a mutual check, a monitor and a friend to each other : They are reciprocally bound, by divine and human laws, to guard and protect their offspring. As soon as they cease to act in these several characters, they depart from the order of Nature, and reject the kindness of Providence : they subject themselves and their children to distress, and they injure the community.

Hospitals.

Hospitals for lying-in women, in some instances, may afford great relief; justice and mercy are due in all cases. If commiseration is not shewn to the offending mother, the innocent infant assuredly perishes; but when the absence of the lawful wife leaves her husband unawed, and her daughters unguarded, is it to be conceived that great mischiefs will not often ensue? The man presuming on charity grows improvident; he is careless in the circumstance where he ought to be most attentive, with regard to the time of the delivery of his wife. Absence from home renders the woman incapable of the domestic care she ought to extend to her family, by seeing her children about her, even when she is confined to her bed. Nature at that season demands ease and cessation from labour; and the tender regards of children to parents, in a good mind afford great comfort and relief. But we must be cautious that our compassion does not outrun our judgment, and induce us to correct in the wrong place. Our common people, at least in these cities, are bred up too much in an opinion, that their preservation depends more on the virtue and munificence of others, than upon their own virtue, industry and foresight.

When I say this, I do not condemn those zealous persons who consult the welfare of mankind, tho' they should be sometimes mistaken: but recommend to their consideration, how their munificence may be applied most advantageously in promoting the most solid and permanent police; and that no check be wanting that can administer to the moral and religious duties of the people.

I have lately contributed, for the first time, a mite to the purpose of relieving lying-in women, in *their own houses*. The more this is extended, the more easy, or less dangerous it may be, to make a further change, and restore domestic life to its true channel. I mean, that the surgeons should instruct midwives to perform the necessary office. In days of yore, a pregnant or lying-in woman would rather have chosen death, than submit to that which is now become so familiar. Why may not a female be a good surgeon, for such purposes, as well as a man a good mantua-maker, or haberdasher of small wares?

To

To consider things in the great views of true social virtue and religious duties, the manner of employing health, and spending money and time, makes the difference between the *elegant, prudent, useful* subject, the *philosopher* and the *Christian* on one side; and on the other, the *sloven, the spendthrift, the insignificant wretch*, whose hopes are confined within the narrow circle of *puerile, selfish, transient* enjoyments. We sometimes see much good done, with a very little money; but wealth alone cannot possibly avail to the great purposes of the happy government of a mighty nation. Money is the instrument of *virtue*, but it is the instrument of *vice* also. We can judge of *zeal*, tho' we cannot all support it like an *Hetherington*.

Without waiting for any formidable national calamity, our fairest prospect of reformation is from the *rising generation*. Example must descend. The influence of the *female* world is confessed. Domestic life, in the best regulated communities, depends on it, in a much higher degree than is vulgarly imagined. The power of women employed according to the order of nature, performs wonders in recalling our sex to that path of duty from which so many stray.

You have daughters: You wish to see them distinguished for their filial piety; their conjugal and maternal love. These are nearly related to the love of God, and like it depend on *instruction* and *habit*. Many of our female youth are sent to school, where too much *care of them* cannot be taken, lest in the bustle of resort they should learn evil as well as good. The sister arts of *music* and *design* are in a flourishing state. Many young females born to fortunes, and the daughters of gentlemen, learn to play on the *harpsichord*, and are very ingenious in the use of the needle and pencil.

The imagination being thus fed, the great secret is to give the mind a true bias, and right inclination; that the understanding may be equally nourished, and every hour employed in something useful, in the rank which a woman may stand in life. As the fancy is the great engine of expence, they should learn how to correct it, rather than how to squander money. This knowledge comprehends the oeconomy of a family:

family: it teaches *frugality* without *meanness*, and *elegancy* even in *poverty*. Let them learn at school the great outline at least, what *can* be done with *so much money*, and what *cannot be done* where there is but *so much*. This is the *police of a family*. This will comprehend the modesty and frugality of *dress*, according to condition of fortune, which is much wanted. This will teach *humility*, and how to render the garb elegant without being expensive or fantastical. Nothing, not absolutely criminal, tends to pervert the female heart so much as the habit of spending much time and money in *amusement*, and the decoration of their persons, following the example of their *superiors in fortune*, and oftentimes of their *inferiors in understanding*. The want of this distinction in *lower life* makes half the prostitutes who now roam the streets; and in *higher*, half the bankruptcies, and complicated miseries, which invade the peace of domestic life.

Many of your daughters spend much time in learning *French*, rarely arriving at any tolerable knowledge of the language, or making it useful to the comfort of life. It would generally contribute much more to their own happiness, and the felicity of those with whom they may be connected, if they were rendered accomplished in their mother-tongue, reading such books as will correct the *heart*, strengthen the *judgment*, and enlarge the *understanding*.—Nor should they be ignorant of the *art of speaking*, so as to be clear in their ideas, and the expression of them; learning how to talk of *things* rather than *persons*, and how to be *silent* when sense and modesty requires it.—They should be acquainted with accounts, so far as regards the oeconomy of a family, and the expence attending their own persons and amusements, committing all to writing, that they may see, from time to time, a picture of their *good or evil* conduct.

The tenderness of affection, and sprightliness of imagination, which characterizes the most amiable part of the sex, makes a woman appear as a *monster*, when she is not susceptible of religious impressions. It might therefore give a happy turn to our manners, if particular attention were employed *at schools*, to render the musical part of the education, as it ought to be, subservient to religion. Girls should be taught very early, not only to pray in the closet, but also assembled in their daily devotion.

This

This holds equally for your sons. Both sexes ought to be taught so much *psalmody*, as to sing in an agreeable metre. Our church considers this as an essential part of the worship of God; yet by a fatality peculiar to us, the major part of our congregations are very ignorant of it. We give up this part of devotion to *parish children*, who scream with a barbarity of vociferation, as if they had been educated among the wildest natives of *America*. True worship has no share in this. We frequently resign our right of worshipping the deity to men we call *the singers*, who try their talents in *bass*, *tenor*, and *treble*, sometimes to the amusement of the congregation; hardly ever to their *edification*. A third kind of singing is *prose run mad*, in horrible sounds of parish clerks. They drawl their words in a manner that excites no devotion, but "like a wounded snake dragging its slow tail along," gives no other impression than compassion for ignorance, and contempt of this custom of our country. Such is not the conduct of the *protestants* and *reformed churches* abroad; they are never more in earnest in devotion, than in their *psalmody*.

Music being most properly the province of women, and your *daughters* generally taught it more than your *sons*, if you think the welfare of your country concerned in *religion*, consider the proper utterance of the praises of God as an essential part of *female education*. Let them be so practised in this duty, that they be both able and willing to teach their husbands, their children and their servants, how to worship God when they most exalt. That voice which the author of nature has given them for this very purpose. Thus the reign of true devotion may be restored, and its throne supported from generation to generation.

When these young women assemble to pray, after performing their *daily orisons*, let them *learn to sing psalms*, and make it a part of their devotion. This might prove a gentle and pleasing method, of holding them in the fear of God, and in good time, bring others back to worship their maker in the "*beauty of holiness*." The neglect of this is the source of so much folly and dissipation, *wanton extravagance*, *unmanly pursuits* of what they call *pleasure*. That which now cloy's its own appetite, and frustrates its own hope, by a change of object may be thus directed to the great ends of true pleasure and substantial happiness.

The

The purity and simplicity of manners which dignify human nature may be rendered *fashionable*. Tho' this word is not strictly admissible as applied to the concerns of religion; yet *custom*, *reason* and *religion* may keep their courts under the same roof, and confirm the sentence which each shall give, as to the true rights of human nature; and what the laws of heaven require at the hands of us rational and accountable beings.

I might mention many parts of our education, which affect our *police*, tho' they may not appear as immediately belonging to it. The freedom of writing is confessed: The pen, like the tongue, being the instrument of good as well as evil, you will deem it no indignity when I say, I hope for our own sakes, as you love God and your country, you will consider well what belongs to your respective duties. If *in these letters* I have gone beyond the due measure of my *social obligations*, and shewn any degree of *presumption*, it doth not arise from any evil principle which I am sensible of: it is one of those infirmities which the world will hardly impute to me as a crime.

I am, with the utmost respect,

Your affectionate fellow-subject,

and most faithful Servant,

20th May, 1775.

Jonas Hanway.

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(a) One thing wanting is to appoint a certain day, as the choice of the first or second *Wednesday* in every month, or every other month, for the guardians of the infant poor to meet. As it now stands, many guardians never meet, though required to meet once in six weeks, and subject to a fine.

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IX. *Enlarge-*

(a) It is remarkable how much the poor in *Scotland* are inclined to be industrious, not that I imagine they have more energy of mind or strength of body, but being poorer and more pious, their clergy taking more pains with them, and no provision being made for them by a parochial law whether they work or not, they naturally take this bent.

I have now a letter before me, in which my friend says, "In my tour from *Antermoy* near *Killyth*, to *Aberdeen*, I did not see any idle folks, no ragged boys or girls about the streets, all of them being employed in knitting or other occupations." Adding these words, "I wish I could say as much for our folks in the great towns to the southward." Whether he means in *Scotland* or *England*, those who know that country will determine.

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	XV. <i>Im-</i>	

(a) & (b). It is said to be already proposed to parliament to build a House of Industry for London, another for Westminster, and a third for Middlesex.

(c) See dedication, page xiv.

(d) Ditto, page xvii.

(e) Ditto, page vi.

(f) Since writing this article, an act passed the Commons for preventing unnecessary removals; but objected to by the Lords, supposed not to be enough digested.

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(a) See page 117.

(b) The guard, or patrol, when the prisoner is admitted into the garden, will necessarily have a sight of the prisoner. Likewise the person who teaches a mechanic art.

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E R R A T A.

Page 27. line 24. *for from, read for*

30. 31. *for render, r. renders*

38. 15. *after imprisonment for the, r. thus the*

57. 29. *for peurile, r. puerile*

89. note (b) 2. *for died, r. died by inoculation*

106. 11. *for which, r. and filth*

115. 19. *libral, r. liberal*

123. 32. *render, r. renders*

134. 25. *attend, r. attends*

150. 12. *members, r. members of*

171. 4. *cutlure, r. culture*

225. 14. *are, r. was*

259. 24. *setting, r. fitting*

279. 32. *takes, r. take*

have their peace interrupted by wars and revolts; not in woods, and on distant mountains, but in the very heart of the metropolis of the empire. On this spot, where we command every thing which can add charms to liberty, and give splendour to the smiles of plenty; to live in dread of rapine, is abominable! - Here government has fixed her standard, and all that is gay and splendid, important and magnificent, is assembled. Do we not see the very scene of the great day? -

L E T T E R I.

IF we judge from history, the most unerring instructor of mankind, the least imperfect state has in its frame, the seeds of its own dissolution; but this we presume will happen only in the circuit of time, when by a *creeping* pace, a people shall have filled up the measure of their folly and wickedness, and brought on their own declension. — Should you or I be good citizens, or think like men of understanding, were we to suppose our country arrived at this fatal period, whilst we see so much *justice* done; and so much *charity* exercised? We have amongst us, many who fear God; numbers whose hearts are warm with good intentions; and not a few who have skill to furnish antidotes against the poison of immorality; and resolution to guard the vital principles of our political existence.

Well then, let us *reason* together *calmly*: let us blend the lights and shades which a candid enquiry into facts will furnish, avoiding the false glare of political prejudices and misrepresentation; and the pompous declamation, of which the times are so prodigal. — We have been, for some years, in an *undisciplined* state: I think the period is arrived, when the energy of government will be exerted properly; that we may not be undone by the means which should preserve us. Whatever is apparently expedient, I trust will no longer give place to the pride, avarice, or caprice of individuals.

We do not yield to any nation, with regard to laws and government; and yet by a strange fatality, no civilized people are half so subject to

have their peace interrupted by *thieves* and *robbers*; not in woods, and on desert mountains, but in the very heart of the metropolis of this empire. On this spot, where we command every thing which can add charms to liberty, and give blandishments to the smiles of plenty; to live in dread of rapine, is abominable! Here *amusement* has fixed her standard, and all that is gay and splendid, ingenious and magnificent, is assembled: Do we abuse these advantages? — Are they *disadvantages*, and the reason why robbers are become more numerous, more daring, and every day more skilful in the arts of plunder? Of this we are sure, that with all our enjoyments, we are in a *state of suffering*: shall we use no other means to curb the *evil-doers* who offend us, than such as experience proves to be ineffectual?

It is the reward of *indolence* to labour under oppression; to confirm distress; and to embitter the cup of life.—Shall we indulge it against the very principle which otherwise acts strongest, the *love of pleasure*?

There are but two tribunals at which we can appeal: *religion* and the *gallows*; the first seems to derive some advantage from our improvements in the arts of civilization; the last from a sense of shame: But there are many, on whom neither of these *secondary motives* make any impression: and some in whom the fear of death is absorbed in the gratification of their appetites and vicious course of life.

In the late reign, when the frequency of robbery became very alarming, the king came to a resolution not to extend the royal clemency to any malefactor, sentenced to death, during the space of a whole year. This was made known, in all due form; and if my information is true, it operated as happily as it was righteously intended: but it was but a temporary relief; the causes which existed soon produced the same effects, and will probably continue to produce them.

The question now is, whether you will execute your laws, by which you profess to govern us; or *make new ones*, better calculated to keep such

such people in awe: Laws not fully executed, are attended, in a certain degree, with the same effects as no laws. If a man may, or may not be hanged for a certain crime, his self-love will suggest to him that he shall not be hanged, tho' found guilty; and consequently that he may commit the crime with impunity. Having in general few other punishments in use amongst us, than the gallows and transportation; if these are not objects of sufficient terror, the barrier of life and property will be so far beaten down. Some delinquents actually wish for transportation as a circumstance they expect will be favourable to their fortunes.

Whipping is in few cases deemed politic, as rendering the criminal so far branded with infamy, that he may become desperate—And we do not think it a right measure to put all such persons to death, as have forfeited their lives to the laws. What then shall we do? What remains but to make such new laws as shall be executed with exactness; both in substance and form.

The first step necessary to clear the land of these hostile invaders, is to convince them it is not their interest to be thieves, nor foes to their fellow-subjects. Let a greater number of prisons be forthwith built, larger, stronger, and better calculated for the purpose of a secure confinement, and a more rational and humane correction. I appeal to every man of candour and experience, who is the least acquainted with the subject, if our prisons are equal to the purpose of receiving such a host of thieves as late years have produced?—Our forefathers had not the least notion of such numbers; and necessity only could have obliged us to congregate them, as we have done, as if we meant they should instruct each other. It is on all sides confessed our prisons are schools of villainy; tho' intended as the dreary abode of sorrow and repentance!—If we counter-act our own principles, and defeat our own end; if we travel on in the same false path, it is impossible we should ever find the secure retreat we seek for.

Mankind will act as they are taught, and practice that which their minds are accustomed to entertain with complacency, be it ever so evil. The execution of good laws as naturally introduces good morals, as

the neglect of them has a contrary effect. It is the same in *religious* matters: If parents or ministers of the gospel are remiss in their duty, the morality of the people will as surely be deficient: I say *morality*, supposing our religion to be the basis of our morals, or in effect, to mean the same thing, our *faith* excepted.

That religion is at a low ebb, is demonstrable, were there no other testimony than the small number of people who frequent the communion table of their several parish churches. The *omission* of this part of the *christian worship*, is now so general, one would imagine the happy restraints it naturally creates, were become too irksome to be longer endured: that we are devotees to sensual pleasure, and therefore reject this duty as an object, in which we are not concerned. In short, we revolt so far against our religion, I hear many, very *soberly*, maintain they are not good enough for it; or that it is much too good for them. They might as well say the same of our secular laws, and disdain our government.

In the mean while our appetites are stimulated by the numerous provocatives to *debauchery* which we find in every corner, particularly of this *metropolis*. I do not mean this as formal declamation: You must be sensible, if the *higher* classes were less dissipated and extravagant, the *lower* would be less *desperate* and *rapacious*; not merely because of the example, but that they would gain time to enter into the spirit of their respective duties. In every rank, folly predominates: if our superiors lose their taste for what is great and manly, the *correction* by a well-regulated *police* will be *neglected*, and the foundations of government undermined, and require some further props.

We have seen and heard, of late years, much *recrimination*; but the imagining evil where there is none, or the finding it out where it exists, without rectifying it, is as fruitless as a dog's barking at the moon, when her light is obscured by a cloud.

To say that "the overflowings of unrighteousness" create terror, may be deemed the language of a *divine*; but he is a bad *politician* who
I looks

looks on with indifference, while he feels the bad effects of such *unrighteousness*. Let us attend the beats of life, whether in a higher or lower track; what crowds shall we meet who are devoted to *amusements*, of which a large portion is of a *sinful* kind; yet these being enjoyed with a greater or less degree of complacency, make up *their system of happiness*. The ties of religion being broken, it is rather wonderful there should not be more daring spirits issue forth, who will gratify themselves at the hazard of their necks, than that there should be so many to furnish out the daily entertainment of a *newspaper*,—to let us into scenes of villainy!—The damage done to one part of the people, by the deprivation of property; and the injury to the other, by the terror which such conduct creates, are become national calamities.

Vice and folly are ever carrying on a war against the interests of mankind; otherwise we should not see the calm of peace so often succeeded by the rage of war, of which our circumstances are a *miniature*. Life is a scene of trial; let the œconomy of a state be ever so good, a large portion of misery will adhere to it: we must make it as light as possible, and in the investigation of our politics, consider whether it doth not chiefly consist in knowing, how to restrain the vices, and give the virtues of the people their proper bias.

Some at all periods have been masters of the arts of *picking pockets*, others of *plundering* on the road. Some have taken our houses by stratagem or storm: In *our days* we feel such grievances the more from being more civilized. In proportion to our superior ingenuity to our forefathers, thieving is reduced to a *system*. Is there not much reason to be alarmed? If among the civilized nations we suffer the most, we are so far the most unhappy.

Some talk of *luxury* as the cause of such evils: If the word were expunged, and *extravagance* substituted, it might be much better: it now serves to reconcile individuals to the crime of ruining themselves. Like *fools*, they follow their superiors in fortune, whose conduct can with no propriety be called an *example* to them, more than the strength of a porter

porter is an example to me, to attempt carrying a heavy burthen. By the same false comparison, we pass over, or stop short of, the true line of liberty, in which is comprehended the care of every individual within the circle of our abilities. You will often hear people say, "The more *charity* there is, the more *misery*!" It is the want of *charity*, which is the cause of the misery: The more folly and extravagance in laying out money, indeed, the more distress is often created. The former complaint I have observed to be in the mouths of those who are not very liberal with their worldly goods, but rather flatter themselves, that he who *does not* give alms, has more sense and virtue than he that *does*. In the mean time *our laws* require a certain portion of our goods, to succour the indigent and distressed: but the numbers who fondly flock to these vast cities, imagining they shall partake of vast opulence, not finding even a support, many women become prostitutes, and men, thieves: these are a mutual aid to each other, in promoting the interest of the prince of darkness; and thus villainy daily gains the ascendancy! *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

IN tracing out the *paths of the iniquity* we complain of, we must examine into the nature and defects of our *police*. The sagacious minister *Burleigh*, under the *auspices* of the great *Queen Elizabeth* laid the foundation of a plan, of such an adamant quality, time has not been able to destroy its lustre: yet as manufactures and agriculture have improved, it is found to be defective, with regard to that part which relates to *settlements*: a strict enquiry has been made, but the remedies proposed have been thought worse than the disease. A further examination is necessary, this part of the law oftentimes proving oppressive.

You are well informed there are numbers of Acts of Parliament for particular parishes, in regard to the mode of our *police*, but the principle of the parochial law in question is still preserved.

The possession of *liberty*, pre-supposes a portion of *virtue* to accompany it: if the duties of a *subject*, a *citizen*, a *christian*, and a *man*, are neglected by those whom providence has placed in a rank, to be advocates, patrons, and friends to the needy, what becomes of their fine-spun ideas of *freedom*? There is a portion of virtue which must keep pace with government, if we mean to be free and happy. A gentleman in many cases is compellable to do the duties of *the poor's laws*, the *foundation of our police*: but compulsive service often proves a *disservice*: and being annual, before the suit is ended, his year is expired.

Thus stand the great out-lines of the *parochial charity*, of which I shall mention much more hereafter: this *properly executed* comprehends a large portion of the relief, which the inferior classes of the people, in all countries, call for; and of this law we avail ourselves, at the moment we complain of its defects. The parochial offices

furnish

furnish opportunities for the minutest investigation of the circumstances of individuals; the *instruction* necessary to prevent the immorality which preys on the vital principles of government; and the truest regulation of our *police*. But we turn the tables upon ourselves, and complain of the duties it requires, as if they were a *drudgery* below the dignity of a gentleman. He that pretends to take the most exact care of twelve or fifteen millions of people, tho' perhaps his share comes to little more than giving his voice, will not exert his patriotism, in the care of twelve or fifteen persons, who invoke the exercise of his humanity with tears of distress. He leaves the duty to the care of mechanics and low persons; and tells you at the same time, "such people are too ignorant, or too interested to be trusted, and hardly ever do the duty in a proper manner!"—

I mention this as a *specimen* of the *humour* of the times, as well as a proof how little we hunger and thirst after That righteousness, which consists in being merciful, as the great Parent of mankind requires us to be, making the doing good, the object of our *delight*.

It is in the mouths of most people, that our *poors-rates* are an enormous burthen; and that in many places they might be greatly reduced. I suppose the latter to be true: but whose shall be the task of reducing them, and at the same time regulate the industry of the poor, cultivate their morals, and establish our *police*? It is beyond all dispute, there is reason to complain, but let us understand one another, and be just in our recriminations.

I reckon the whole people to spend annually full *sixty millions*, of which they pay *one and an half*, or about a *fortieth* part, to the *parochial poor*. We call this a heavy tax; but few of us consider, that a large portion of it goes to maintain *orphans*, and the rising generation of the labouring poor, who in other countries are more destitute, and dispersed, and often perish. It likewise supports the *aged* who are past their labour, and who call on the humanity for which we are distinguished. If the latter had been provident, they might not have availed themselves of this law, for their support in old age; but neither
can

can it be at the same time presumed, they would have performed so much labour, as to enable the people at large to spend *sixty millions* a year?

But you ask, "Are not the *poors-rates* the secret cause of the improvidence and licentiousness of many *manufacturers, mechanics, and labouring people*, who will work no greater time than their necessities compel them? You are sensible that, when provisions are dear, they labour much more than when they are cheap." I grant it: But let me ask in my turn, if they were to hoard, and become so far independent of their labour, for their daily bread, would they not, *for the very same reason*, decline working so much?—If they did not spend their money as they gain it, would your *revenues* be so high to answer the exigences of the state?—*Private vices* are not therefore *public benefits*, but good and evil are blended together, and we must accept them both at the hand of heaven. We must refer to the call of *necessity* in both cases, and thank God for what we are able to spend, as well as for being able to pay the taxes required. In the mean while let us mend the morals of the people by all the honest arts we can devise; for the better these are, the happier we shall all be.

Let us suppose, that you and I and a thousand better men duly discharged our several duties, instead of devoting so large a portion of our lives to pride, sensuality, and amusement; would it not cost us less money than we now spend? Were we to do *our work, as God intended*, the common people would probably perform *theirs*: Upon what foundation then do we complain? *Ignorance, idleness, and dissoluteness* always militated against our peace: we now behold them take the form of *rapine and violence*.

The division of this kingdom into parishes, implies the communication of a knowledge of the circumstances of individuals, as they are under the influence of the *clergy*; the power of the *lord of the manor*; the authority of the *justice of the peace*; the affluence and benignity of the *gentleman*, and the benevolence of the *philosopher*. The divisions and subdivisions of the people, furnishing the means of government,

the *parochial poor* are, in effect, the part of mankind most necessary to be attended to. If in the several characters I have mentioned, we combined to cherish the virtue, and controul the vice of the people, what could we fear? But when under either of these obligations we abandon our duty, evils will come, and woe will attend those by whom they come!

In an age of refinement and penetration, the *most obvious truths* are disdained, because they are obvious. *Politics* often sympathize with the sufferings of *religion*, exactly in the same circumstances; except that we do not see, with the eye of sense, the tremendous portals of perdition set open before us! You who act in so many capacities, in town and country, may sit in judgment on your own heart; and pass such sentence, as justice may require at your hands. Do not tell me that my speculations are *refined*. They are a clear deduction of argument drawn from facts and common life: but since we have swerved so much from our duty to God and our country, and neglected the preventive *recipe*, I mean to recommend your searching the political dispensary, for some potent drug, to purge off the infection, and deliver us from the fever of violence and rapine. Let this serve as a *proem* to the *proposals* and *reflections* which I shall communicate in my future letters. Farewell.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R III.

UPON what principle can you expect good order and obedience to *human institutions*, but as there is a sense of the *divine law* among the people, to co-operate with motives of fear of *temporal* punishment? We seem to be distinguished among the nations, for *presumption* and *infidelity*, our ignorance of religion, or our neglect of it. —I am sorry to say, that which will give you pain if you believe it; and may injure my reputation for discernment, if you do not. But as far as appears to me, who have been conversant with the common people, few of them have such a sense of religion on their minds, as in general to induce them to offer up the shortest prayer, as incense to the great author of nature, in the evening; and still less do they attend to any morning sacrifice.

In countries where ignorance and superstition have established their empire, there is still a sense of religion which leads the people to be humble and submissive. Are our obligations to heaven, for the *superiority* we enjoy, to be treated with disdain? Does not the blood revulse at the thought! With regard to the sentiments of the higher classes, if they treat the common people with indifference in this point, as if these were mere beasts of burthen; they must not be surprized to find their ferocity less manageable than that of a *horse*, — perhaps it will be sharpened with the claws of a *lion*: and these will become the instruments of the divine resentment.

If we consider the consequences of our ignorance, and spiritual idleness, we shall find the greater necessity grow from it, to establish a *police* with all possible attention to religion. Police is the *minutia* of government,

ment, but without it there can be none of those restrictive regulations, which are preparatory to the execution of laws of the greatest importance. For the same reason it is as essential to the support of a *free* people, in their liberty, as it is necessary in a *despotic* government to maintain authority. What was it but the want of police, which caused your weeping parish infants, to be sacrificed, as they were, for so many ages (a). Sins of omission are, in many cases, sins of commission. It is fortunate for a people when they are obliged to do That, which it would be their highest honour, their present happiness, and their future glory to perform, from the freest dictates and concurrence of the will.

To trace evils to their source, is sometimes as unpleasant, as it is an invidious task.—But I find myself compelled by justice to my subject, to say, I have ever strove to unite the ideas of the Word of God, and the reverence due to the more immediate disciples of our Lord. Our church supposes the clergy to be moved by a sincere inclination to act with the zeal, and to support the dignity, which were the characteristic marks of those who were commissioned by the great Lord of life to promulgate his doctrine. This, it must be presumed, is their leading principle, who are happily made choice of to lead us in the ways of everlasting felicity. Allowing for the accidents, which candour and christian charity provide for, numbers of them are truly *reverend*, as by the laws of courtesy we style them, and perhaps no clergy in the world, are so learned, or of purer morals. But it is not a time for flattery, when we mean to trace an evil to the fountain head. How deficient then is the *education* of many of them! How little justice is done *them* or *their country*, when they are first set apart for the sacerdotal function. *Eusebius* tells us, that when St. *Ambrose* was chosen bishop of *Milan*, he was so much affected with the consideration of the importance of the charge, he hid himself, that he might not be elected. After he was in some degree constrained to take upon himself the office, he declared to some of his friends, he felt himself so extremely

(a) Alludes to the Act of 7th of his present majesty, relating to the infant poor of these cities.

extremely agitated, he thought his body and soul would have been torn from each other.

We must not draw conclusions from the practices of those early days; neither perhaps will you allow me the right of considering the duties of the clergy, strictly speaking, as a part of our *police*; but surely in their consequences, they are a very important part of it. It is with spiritual, as with animal nourishment; if we are very deficient in the first digestion, the whole mass will be lamentably corrupted.

I once spent a few days in a seat of learning, not with a view to study, but to see the *practice* of the worship of God, in a scene which I considered as peculiarly devoted to his glory. I imagined myself surrounded by so many stately monuments, erected to the honour of *piety* and *charity*; virtues ultimately comprehending the whole of human life. I indulged the idea, presuming I should find many students, at least as much in earnest as myself, with the addition of their advantage over a man bred in the busy mercantile world: But alas! their practice seemed to be in a great measure mechanical: they went to a *certain place*, at a *certain hour*, to repeat *certain words*, at which not half of those were present who should have been there. The zeal and spirit of devotion, which the pious founders meant to transmit down to posterity, seemed to be so much forgotten, they appeared to me, who meant to discover nothing more than truth, to have deviated from the principles of their foundations. It occurred to me as a *necessary police*, that *less duty, better performed*, would be far preferable, and give young men a more awful sense of the profession of a teacher of the gospel. Their practice seemed to bear a strong similitude, with the *ordinary custom* of setting *little children* to read the sacred writings in such a manner as to render the oracles of God as irksome as they are unintelligible to them; and thus create an indifference or dislike to the scriptures, through the remainder of their lives.

So far as this reproach is warrantable; and so far as any clergyman learns the *science of being indifferent* with respect to his devotion, or towards his parishioners,

parishioners, we must submit to live under the painful fear of rapine. The cause will ever produce its effect; and 'till the education of *clergymen* is better taken care of, I fear they will not be so well qualified for the part they are to act, as the *inquisitive, observing, daring genius* of the people requires. The abolition of Romish absurdities must be supported by a *consistent conduct* as well as *doctrine*, otherwise we lose the advantages of *passive obedience*, without obtaining the *glorious freedom* of the *sons of liberty*. If we examine with accuracy and candour, I believe we shall find, that the greater the civil freedom of a nation, the purer ought the practice of their religion to be; and the greater their consistency throughout their whole conduct, or liberty will be used as a cloak of licentiousness. Our soldiers and sailors, as such, are as well disciplined as those of any other nation: but is there as good care taken of their morals? If the *officer* does not worship God, the *common man* will not think he has any thing to do with religion; and as he is of a daring profession, unless he is *disciplined* we shall be in danger of his occasionally acting a part the reverse of what he engages to perform.

We have learnt to refine with the subtilty of *Italians*, and the levity of the *French*. We investigate our objects with the utmost accuracy of logical science: But will these promote simplicity of life, or probity of heart, among the people? Will these strengthen our persuasion of the immortality of the soul, or confirm the belief of a state of rewards and punishments after death? So far as our refinements are imitable by the common people, they increase their *infidelity* and disrespect for their national religion. We do not find, that the observance of christian precepts, keeps pace with, much less increases with the knowledge of arts or science.

The superior classes of the people, I mean with many exceptions of individuals, have adopted a kind of substitute for *religion*, which they call *honour*; they make a kind of idol of it, and transfer to it, the homage due to the one true God, the everlasting object of their worship. Can *this* produce any good to the common people? A thief may be *honourable*

able enough to be true to his companion ; but if the man were *religious* he would not be a *thief*.

Our sovereigns, are justly stiled *defenders of the faith*, and they swear to maintain it. They are no less the fountain of *honour* ; but we are not inclined to be guided either by one or the other, but as we please to construe them ; and the *faith of a christian*, and the *honour of a gentleman*, are generally understood to mean very different things, and frequently clash ; our religion and our principles militating against each other. Will *this* lead the people right, with respect to their obligations to morality and religion ?

A man that *sends a challenge*, or *accepts one*, killing his antagonist, is generally understood to offend against both the divine and human law, and to be guilty of death ; and the honourable gentlemen would, upon this principle, be certainly hanged : But here we compassionate the offence against God, and society. Thus our *vindictive justice* stands on the foundation of a venial sin. Are the common people to be taught this distinction ; and do we not bewilder them ?

Our principles are so far tainted, even many of our women vindicate the doctrine of *duelling*. They too have a notion of *honour*, as a *fine thing* ! We are a very *brave people* ; but the question is, if a great part of our bravery does not consist in a contempt or disregard of laws, divine and human ? I am an officer in the army, old enough to be *wise* ; and like a *man*. I think of my latter end : my courage no one ever called in question : and life is not of much concern to me. A silly young fellow, in the passionate puerility of his heart, sends me a *challenge*, which I must accept,—for no better reason than that he is so foolish as to send it to me.—If upon a principle of *faith* and obedience to my religion ; of sense of duty to the king, whose commission I bear ; to my country, to which I have devoted my life ; to humanity, at whose altars I am ready to die ; to compassion for a foolish young man, who perhaps is father to many children !—If from the united force of so many important considerations, I decline this fantastical encounter, am I to be *broke* ? Will my brother officers say, they will not *rank* with me ? In this case will

the sovereign stand forth, in good earnest, as a champion for the cause of *Christ*, or will he countenance those who act as if they had no *christian faith*, nor *the compassion of men*? Can we devise a better rule of conduct than that prescribed by the christian Law? We have, indeed, found another which is supposed to be *better*; but instead of rewarding virtue, it punishes her, or it leaves her to reward herself. The common people, not having such high conceits of *virtue*, will, so far as this example goes, not chuse to trust her, they will rather trust to *vice*. Is our conduct in this respect *manly*? Is it fit for a nation, which means to establish *order* upon principles of moral rectitude; to countenance virtue, and by the exercise of religious duties, and the laws of our country, prevent rapine, and the effusion of blood, the last being the object the *most sacred* of any in civil society?

I mention these instances, meaning to use them as a *touchstone*, whether we are made of *true* or *false* metal, and to shew how far we depart from our character as an *intelligent, manly people*, disdaining to walk in the steps of those nations, whom we fondly imagine we throw out of the course of virtue and true religion, which must ever be the foundation of all that is great and good in a community.

It is self-evident, that if we mean to influence so inquisitive and daring a people as we are, we must be in earnest in the whole œconomy of government, and act with bravery, maintaining our ground on the rock whose foundations are laid in everlasting truth. If the *higher* classes are not *resolute* in *right things*, the *lower* will be *resolute* in *wrong ones*.—There is no halting between good and evil. The time must come, when we shall know there is a God who judges the earth, and whom we *must obey*, or he *will punish*; and whether it be by the sword of a foreign or domestic enemy, in a lower or higher degree, still we must feel the sad effects of *disobedience*!

Let us not lead ourselves into a labyrinth of perplexities: if *one* wrong thing may be done, and thus countenanced and supported by custom, and upon *principle*, why not *another*? And if *all* crimes against laws, are not punished *by the laws*, can we be said to act like a free, a manly, re-

ligious, consistent people? Can we indeed be surprized at any thing that happens to us, with regard to the practices of the illiterate, and those who reason very little?

I once heard a young man of *education* maintain, that no man should *want*: his meaning was, that if he had occasion for *money*, which he could not get by any other way, he would take it by force. His doctrine, tho' not justifiable, upon any principle of divine or human laws, yet it might be maintained with as little casuistry as the pernicious practice I have just mentioned. The argument might be carried much further, if the occasion would warrant it.

I set out with saying, that we have much justice and charity amongst us; and therefore I trust we are not devoted to any speedy destruction: but as a flaw in a brilliant of the first water is more striking to the eye than in an inferior stone, we should consider the rank we bear among the nations, and become virtuous, were it only from national pride.—We should deem it our true glory, to be *good*, rather than *great*, and to teach the simple, rather than flatter the proud.

To be an *unprincipled* people, or not to *aét up to our principles*; what is the difference? To hang one man for violating the laws, and not hang another in the *same case*, or so nearly the same as hardly to be distinguished, is not the true way to promote the peace and good government of a country.

You will think, perhaps, that I stumble on very untoward subjects: I have said, it is not a question of *flattery* to reigning customs or predominant prejudices, but a rational and manly opposition to them, for which we must contend. Do we mean to defend the immutable laws of God, who is the supreme legislator, the judge, the punisher and rewarder of all the inhabitants of the earth, through all their generations? If we do, let us shew it.—If we do not, the event will be misery. If we have erred, let us *amend*—and let our *amendment* be an earnest, that *we have every thing that is good to hope for!* Farewell.

L E T T E R IV.

HOW easy it is for us poor mortals, by the indiscriminate use of the bounties of providence, to convert our *aliment* into *poison*! Among other causes of the *daring* spirit which shews itself in *treachery*, fraud and rapine, I reckon the *abuse* of the *press*. I believe the greatest advocate for it, cannot deny, it hath contributed its share to the immorality which now walks amongst us with gigantic strides, occasionally striking the bold with anxiety, and the fearful with terror.

It is now above twenty years (a) since I first employed my pen; I hope not altogether unsuccessfully: I intended to promote the cause of *religion* and *philanthropy*; and so far as I have been of use during this part of the long life which heaven has granted me, I have not abused the privilege which I have enjoyed. How many much better writers than myself, have prostituted their talents to their revenge, their pride, or ambition, I know not. The press having been instrumental to my pious and patriotic gratifications, I am bound to mention it with honour. Indeed, I have generally thought it an *excellent privilege*, in the possession of a *virtuous people*, as an instrument of advancing knowledge, and as the *guardian* of civil and religious liberty. In the hands of an abandoned generation, it may become no less dangerous an instrument to foment division, and disseminate a contempt of authority. That it may operate to the cure of its own disease, by one pen exposing the defects of another, is no less true. Like the *tongue*, which God hath left *free*, it may be used for his glory, and the good of his creatures, or degraded to the vilest purposes that ever disgraced human nature.

(a) I published my travels in Jan. 1753.

It is not then the term, *liberty of the press*, which has any magic power in it, but the *use* or *abuse* of the *liberty of the people*, by the instrumentality of the press; and consequently this part of our *privileges* and *customs* may be considered as the *truest friend*, or the most *inveterate enemy*. It hath, in a gradual manner, apparently enlarged our *knowledge* of our *civil* and *religious rights*; but that it hath made us the more truly observant of the sacred regards due to them, in all respects, agreeably to such knowledge, is not true; and the reason is no less evident; for it hath been often employed in *flattering our corruption*, by villifying authority, and blasting the characters of each other, with the pestilential breath of indiscriminate detraction.

Our *laws*, or the dispensers of our laws, having frequently paid a servile homage to popular prejudices, the press has often revolted against its own avowed principles; and levied war against *liberty*. The overweening indulgence shewn it, has often brought it into the circumstances of a *pampered child*, not discerning his own danger from the false fondness of his parents. As the *laws* have stepped forth to regulate the *ballance of justice*, the press has again recovered its native colour and complexion, wearing the smiling modest face of *virtue* and obedience to moral obligations; shewing that the *higher classes* are as *free* as the *lower*; and *their rights*, too sacred to be trifled with, to gratify the humour of a mob, or encourage the secret intrigues of avarice or ambition, supported by popular prejudices.

The mask being thrown off, the people have beheld the beauty of the press, not as an impudent prostitute, but a chaste and consecrated vestal, whose sacred province it is to poise the scale of *justice* and *liberty*.

It is the fundamental principle of freedom, that the rights of all subjects are equal; and the law of retaliation the rule and guide of equity. The most illustrious peer, who kills the peasant, must himself die!—

Leaving the press standing on this permanent basis, it seems necessary to liberty, that as it is so very easy for one man to blast the good name

of another; to injure his *fortune*, or to wound his *peace*, it should be as easy to obtain justice upon his complaint.

The expence of prosecutions, in almost every case, in these days, is burthenfome; in order therefore to maintain the *liberty of the press*, i. e. the liberty of the people, to use the press; I propose to your consideration,

1. If it may not be a security to us, if a *law were enacted*, ascertaining the cost and charges of a suit, with regard to any such offence.

2. As a printer may be indemnified in a pecuniary way, by his principal; if he is judged, by his peers, to be a conspirator, or accomplice in giving a stab to any one's character or fortune, if it should be equally in the breast of the jury to ascertain the number of weeks or months which *he* shall suffer *imprisonment*.

This would more effectually provide for the liberty of the people, together with the genuine liberty of the press. Unhappily we are used to speak of these, as if they were *distinct objects*, and from this habit confound the ideas of *good order*, *liberty*, *insolence* and *oppression*. The object is so important in its nature, no transition is so easy as from the *pen* to the *sword*; and the press is as admirably calculated to promote *civil war*, as to preserve civil and religious liberty.

In a word, as it is so familiar a thing to write and print, it should be no less easy to arraign and punish for injuries committed, by *writing* and *printing*; that under a notion of *liberty*, we may not find ourselves *enthralled*, and subscribe to our own destruction.

Whether you abuse me, or my father, my friend, my enemy, or my fellow-subject, my resentments in behalf of *liberty*, should be the same; and if they are not, I am so far instrumental to the slavery of my neighbour. I consent to the subversion of the good order and discipline, which constitute the essence of government, from the lowest act of *palice*, to the highest salutary exertion of legal authority.

It is not an easy thing to enforce on the minds of the common people, nor on those who want *judgment*, or *candour*, right impressions of their own advantages, with regard to the *press*; their prejudices being more subject to be played upon, by this means, than by any other: but as surely as their *morals* are wounded, by any false judgment, they turn their privilege against themselves; and in the comprehensive views of their *temporal* as well as *eternal* interest, the press will militate against their own peace. In the mean time the *artful* and *designing*, tho' they discern the mischief, they make the ignorant and prejudiced, dupes to their ambition.

As to the *balance* of the *good* or *evil*, the press differs but little from other instruments in the hands of Providence. Let us consider our duty to God and our country in the first place; shewing as tender a regard to political prejudices, as is consistent with the *safety* of the people; that in the general tenor of their lives, they may not hurt themselves, by any disobedience to divine or human laws.

I have heard some ascribe the *Revolution* to the press: I believe we are indebted to a better thing, namely, the *common sense* and *virtue* of the nation. That the purity of our *civil rights*, so far exceeding all those of other nations, is a good effect of the press; let us take the evidence to be true, and the *good* as apparent; but still we must leave the *final decision* of the whole question, in the hands of God. Dropping the consideration of all *political* disquisition, the host of literary productions which has issued from the press of late years, of which many have been calculated to inflame the imagination of the reader, have they not preyed on the purity of the heart, perverted the will, or darkened the understanding? Can we call these good effects? Many an unthinking youth has been plunged into penury, disease, and early death; summoned to appear before that tribunal, the authority of which he had learnt from the books he read, to despise. These have been *abuses* of the *liberty of the press*, making That instrumental to *evil*, which in its true nature and use, is *good*; a friend to freedom; an advocate for distress; a light shining in darkness; a star to illumine the horizon, giving power.

power to every person to become the instrument of heaven to diffuse its mercies. Without the press, we might not have recovered from the errors of superstition, idolatry, and the barbarous witchcraft, to which the soul is subject; and of which we have such strong and indubitable evidence in the records of those ages, when the press was not known, or only in its infant state. Deprived of the same advantage, we might fall again into the same state of barbarism, and become as savage in our practices, as our ancestors were in the earliest records of our history!

I have only to add, as more immediately applicable to the *good* or *evil* tendency of the press, with respect to our *police*, that it would be a curious speculation to estimate the quantity of good or evil done to the *peace*, the *simplicity*, the *industry* of the peasant, by the volumes of *falsehoods* and *nonsense*, as well as truth and reason, which he has found in the news-papers for *forty years past*. How it hath given a pleasing relish to his enjoyments, and made his life pass with the more satisfaction; or filled his mind with ideas he had been much wiser and happier without. How the time spent in *reading* might have been employed in *working*, and lined his *pocket* rather than his *scull*.—If every one were to consider what his *intentions* are, and what good or evil he may do; the press would be rendered more respectable in itself, and more friendly to the *people*. How far the passion or habit of writing carries some, and penury induces others to sell poison for the mind sweetened by the reigning prejudices, or favourite opinions, may be more difficult to ascertain. *Farewell.*

L E T T E R

L E T T E R V.

TO do *justice* and *shew mercy*, being the first principle of *natural* as well as *revealed* religion, we are to consider what part we have to act as *subjects* and *friends to human kind*. Let us not refine away the substance of things by speculative argument and *declamation*, timidly neglecting the most rational and practicable means of doing good, tho' they may fall short of the full purpose in view.

When I hear people exclaim against a thing they acknowledge themselves ignorant of, it seems to imply a resolution, that they are determined to remain ignorant. We are told that there is a time for all things; may there not be one for making a generous attempt to heal That part of the insanity of the age, which relates to the supposed necessity of shedding so much blood, and losing so many subjects by banishment? And if we can find out the secret, by which we may walk our streets early and late, and travel over our well-levelled roads, and the delightful gardens of our fields, in safety, will it not be a great and a good work? If, while we plume ourselves on our liberty, "sleep is subject to be *murdered*" by the vile hands of rapine, what are we about?

I have no conception how this great work can be accomplished, but in a regular mode of *prevention*. A disease, which has taken root in the *habit*, cannot be eradicated without a *regimen*.—It will be three years; next *March*, since I published a *quarto pamphlet* (a), in which my chief endeavour was, to point out how a capital reform might be made in the police of the city of *London*, particularly with regard

(a) On the causes of the dissoluteness which reigns among the lower classes of the people: the propensity of some to petit larceny: and the danger of gaming, concubinage, and an excessive fondness of amusement in high life, &c.

regard to *Bridewell Hospital*. I found myself supported by the opinion of several of the most intelligent magistrates: but it went no farther. Not being a governor of that Hospital myself, nor finding any of my acquaintance to take it under their care, my speculation dropt at That time. New events open men's minds: and as it hath pleased the Almighty to add so many years more to my number, I think proper to renew my proposal, as founded in reason, practicable in its nature, and probably most happy in its *end*. If in the issue it should please divine Providence to render it successful, let us praise *the giver of all good!*

Among other proposals relating to *police*, I mentioned the *hackneyed* theme of *public-houses*, and the numerous places of amusement, which necessarily operate against the morals of the people. Within these few days I have been furnished with an anecdote, very close in point. A certain parish in the *North of England*, where *no public-house* was licenced, and where there was no *poor's rates*, nor occasion for any such relief: at length *three licences* were granted; and what was the consequence? Within thirty months, the poor's rate amounted to *eighteen pence* in the pound. Upon this, the *justices* withdrew the licences, and the œconomy of the people reverted to its former channel, and no rate was necessary.

Some compute that we have *seventy thousand* public houses for the sale of liquor in *England*, which is one for less than every *hundred persons*. If the number were *fifty thousand*, foreigners might joke and say, "half the people in England are employed to draw liquor for the other half to drink." Alas! tho' nature has given us rivers and springs in abundance, we drink up so much *grain*, we have lost an *export*, which brought in half a million sterling annually!—

On the other hand, what a multitude of taxes arise from such numerous scenes of festivity, in public diversions, is less difficult to determine than how to restrain such diversions! If our habits of dissipation, unite in promoting the *national revenues*, it stamps them so far with marks of *merit*; tho' we cannot investigate them with any precision, without finding them to be *public evils*.

That

That which cannot be *abolished*, may be regulated. I suggested that if *ale-houses* were shut up by nine o'clock, and taverns by eleven at night, and no public-house permitted below the surface of the earth, it might contribute to prevent *thieving*: ebriety and darkness afford a mutual aid for desperate exploits, which generally end in the ruin of some unhappy wretches.

In the city of *London*, licences used for night-houses and cellars, where the profligate rendezvous, are, upon proper evidence, frequently taken away by the authority of an *alderman*.—If this practice operates happily in the eastern parts of these cities, it may have a similar effect in the *western*, and afford the less encouragement to robbery.

If those, whose fortunes and connections set them in some measure above the standard of *police*, gamble through the night—who is to restrain the obscure night-house? Change the name, and the quality of persons, the conduct is equally offensive to good order.

On this head, it may be observed, that our vast and numerous assemblies, for the *important purpose of playing at cards*, must necessarily make very disadvantageous impressions with regard to *police* and good order. Such an army of examples, shews the people the way to become *gamesters*. The footmen of persons of fortune amuse themselves with cards at ale-houses, often plunging themselves into difficulties, whilst the women servants at home, too often play at cards for money. Losses will ensue, and their wits will be exercised to repair them. In the mean time, the *thief* takes the advantage of the absence of the master and mistress, to rob their houses; or robs *them*, after *they* have deprived other people of the money they could not spare. Thus folly and iniquity take their *rounds by night*: and tho' I do not mean to confound distinctions and degrees of danger, yet if all degrees are dangerous, it is not my province, on this occasion, to flatter the highest more than the lowest of mankind. Let them look to the event!

Most of the polite nations of *Europe*, are much addicted to the same amusement, nor can I tell what the comparative demerit may be; but

we seem to have a greater field to range in, and more duties arising from our *affluence* and our *liberty*, than the people of most other countries. Our passions and habits seem also to be stronger, and vast numbers of the people, who might be the truest friends and benefactors to mankind, actually spend so large a portion of their time at cards, they appear to have changed an innocent amusement, into a *puerile, servile employment*. They give a false bias to the manners of the people, by the example of gaming, whilst their own dignity and influence are so far depreciated as to render them less able, and less willing, to perform the manly duties of religion and good policy.

I cannot resist mentioning the following, as another apparent cause of our immorality and rapine. Some raise fortunes by plunder in war; some by the fruits of regular commerce; a few by commercial connections with the crown; and numbers by the improvement of land by skill and industry. So far it is well; but this has infected many individuals with the disease of a canine appetite for *vast fortunes*, tho' in the comprehensive view of national advantage and prosperity, these serve for little more than to increase the price of every thing we consume, and make it appear, in general, the more difficult to live.

And what are the frequent effects of our *lotteries*? These, I apprehend, contribute no small share towards wounding the *morality* of the people, by false hopes of being advanced above their station in life; and tho' they may keep some of us *humble* by making us *poor*, I conceive it makes a greater number *wicked*, by the means used to try their fortune; and the discontent with which poverty is subject to be invaded, when an equal has a sudden and great change. We may go further, and say, That when low people make a sudden great acquisition, they are not often rendered morally the better for it. So far I apprehend a *state lottery* is a *state evil*; and, that the pecuniary advantages derived from it to the public, are not adequate to the danger of the immorality it promotes.

If we consider by what imperceptible gradations a nation may be undone; and that, in the great events of human life, its destruction has been generally wrought by the hands of the people themselves, a wise
nation

nation will find out wise means for its support, tho' they should be less popular.—Popularity, as now in fashion, is a very precarious good to the possessor; a passion for it, is another cause of immorality; for sometimes it is in effect offering incense to the devil, by flattering the folly, pride and iniquity of the populace, for the ends of the avarice or the ambition of individuals, who would sometimes pull down *government*, in order to establish a reputation on much worse ground.

With regard to the *assemblage of so great a portion of the people on one spot*, this also operates against our morals, from this plain and obvious cause, that the contagion of *vice* will ever be in proportion to the number of people assembled; not only from the greater ease of concealment, but likewise from the more daring impudence, growing from the sanction given to vice by numbers.

We may also impute it to our folly, in shewing a *false tenderness* to such domestic servants whose conduct is very exceptionable, if they frequently betray their trust. When we *give characters*, we are apt to conceal some material circumstance, without sufficient assurance that the party will amend. This, joined to our neglect of their religious deportment, and our opinion that they have *religion enough for a servant*, is often the occasion that they have no religion at all. In effect, our charity is seen more in alms-giving, than in the weighty concern of the care of *our country* and men's souls.

In the mean time, people of fortune and condition, with the ablest heads and best hearts, are totally unqualified from doing any material good, whilst living in a crowd, where they scarce know the name of their next neighbour. If these withdraw themselves from those scenes, where their influence might cherish the hearts, and enlighten the understandings of their dependant villagers, what can be the event? It is leaving sheep exposed to wolves without a shepherd. This cuts against us like a two-edged sword.

The conduct of people in higher life, affects our youth of the lower classes, not only with respect to the *promiscuous commerce* of the sexes, but

likewise in the custom of *concubinage*. This, in defiance of the *Christian law*, increases with scenes of dissipation and debauchery, stimulating the invention of the indigent, to find the means of gratifying the extravagance of *abandoned women*. What a doleful case was that of the other day, in the person of *Lewis* an ingenious well-disposed young man! Had it not been for his connection with a sad jade, who it is said tempted him to *forgery*, he might have done honour to his country!

Whatever contributes to the *decay of religion*, must subvert *good order*. The more difficult the task of keeping the *laity* within bounds, the less able will the *clergy* be to discharge their part; and so far as they are tainted with the epidemical disease of dissipation, the less *willing* will they be, to execute their duty. Being men of like passions with ourselves, if they also are habituated to *indulge their fancy*, they will not be disposed to resign the vanities of the world, to live at their vicarages among peasants, nor even among princes. Such is the natural course of things, and every class of men claims our share of compassion!

The first principle of government, where laws are the magnets which teach mankind how to steer their course, must be *obedience to laws*, divine and human; whence it is obvious, that the parochial clergy must be the instruments of restraining the wantonness of *individuals*. If they were personally known and familiarized to their parishioners, and all contests prevented, as much as possible, the morals of the people would soon wear a different complexion.

The clergy seem to have a good title to their share of the improvements of cultivation, as by law appointed for tythes; but this has unhappily laid the foundation of such *contests* between them and the *laity*, as militate strongly against a religious conduct, on all sides: and, unless a *modus* can be fixed on, were it only for the *small tythes*, it promises no speedy return of the *golden age*.

I am launched into a spacious ocean, but I mean not to enter into any controversy: I intend to consider *chiefly*, what may, and ought to be done, in behalf of these cities, and the county of *Middlesex*, respecting

ing the *police*. This is the grand magazine of iniquity, from whence the other provinces are supplied with fascinating drugs to poison the morals of the whole people, which the goodness of our roads, renders so much the more easy. Whether the *ferocity* of the vulgar is the object most to be dreaded; or that we depend most on *their* labour, in either case we should *begin* with the *indigent*, in the *early stages* of *their* lives: and if we do not consider young men and young women who are not well instructed, with the same tenderness as we do *children*, our business will never be done. Farewell.

L E T T E R VI.

HAVING ventured to suggest a thought, by which the sacred rights of the press may be the better guarded from violation; I am naturally led to wish it were more employed, in defending the *true barriers* of civil liberty: These are our *religious rights*! In the degree that our *national* religion is forgotten or despised, we must expect to droop under the frowns of heaven: these we shall feel, by the immoral practices of our fellow-subjects. That one part of the Christian-worship, is attended to, only by a small portion of the people, I am sure is true. I as certainly know, that one of the excuses, which is generally made, is founded on a palpable error. I am equally assured of the abilities of our divines, to combat prejudices. The people are fond of a fantastical excuse, not to attend the sacrament of our Lord's-supper, pretending, that *Saint Paul*, in his 1st epistle to the *Corinthians* (a), tells them, " that

(a) Chap. xi. Our Saviour, in the institution of the Lord's-supper, tells the Apostles, that the bread and the cup, were sacramentally his body and blood; and that they were to be eaten and drank, in remembrance of him; which, as *St. Paul* interprets it, *ver. 26.* was to shew forth his death 'till he came. Whoever therefore eat and drank them, so as not solemnly to shew forth his death, followed not *Christ's* institution, but used them *unworthily*, *i. e.* not to the end to which they were instituted. This makes *St. Paul* tell them,

"that he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh
 "damnation to himself." Will our divines be more frequent and
 more explicit in giving the people information that neither Saint *Paul*
 nor any other writer of the New Testament, ever said any such thing,
 and that the context clearly proves, he did not mean it, altho' the word
damnation, unluckily dropt from the pen of the zealous translator. It
 is corrected by the marginal note, to signify the judgments of God; but
 it is not corrected in the first exhortation in the Communion-service.

Is it not an object of legislative authority, to preserve the dignity and
 purity of the sacred writings? If we have not courage, nor are consistent
 enough to do this, what are we to expect? To be undone for fear of
 being undone? This is as essential to the moral conduct of a great part
 of the people, as the *Decalogue*. The Almighty has declared, "Thou
 "shalt not steal." In regard to the sacrament, the great promulgator
 of the christian law says, "Do this in remembrance of me." We are
 Christians, or we have *no religion*. Those who are not taught, or do
 not teach their children, that to be Christians, is to remember Christ,
 know not what they do: if they *do not* chuse to remember him, by as
 plain a logical deduction, they *do* chuse to forget the Commandments.

Without going deeper into the subject, I am morally certain, that
 the people being diverted from coming to the sacrament, by *false*
terrors, become indifferent to their *national religion*; the transition to
 gross immoral practices becomes as familiar to them, as the terrors of
 temporal punishments lose their force, by the infidelity which their ir-
 religious negligence has introduced.

Here is a subject for the *press*, to be recommended, with equal
 warmth and tendernefs, day by day, and line by line, with the elegant,
 yet

ver. 20. that their coming together to eat as they did, viz. the sacramental bread and wine,
 promiscuously with their other food, as a part of their meal, and, that tho' in the same
 place, yet not all together at one time, and in one company, was not eating of the Lord's-
 supper.—Damnation, by which our translation render *Krima*, is vulgarly taken for eternal
 damnation in the other world; whereas *Krima* here signifies punishment of a temporal nature,
 as appears indubitably by *ver.* 30, 32.

yet nervous force, the simplicity and perspicuity, for which we have such armies of pen-men, admirably qualified to fight against the *devil*, by whose works, our security is rendered so precarious.

It seems to be universally acknowledged that our *police* is so defective; and the immorality of the common people extended to such a height, some salutary plans of *prevention* are become absolutely *necessary*. To accomplish the end without the means, is a vague and fruitless expectation. The punishments now in use are not adequate to the evil. We are not sufficiently considerate as to the manner in which we treat offenders. We cannot imagine a miracle will be wrought in our favour.—Whilst I am writing, one of my friends has informed me that he had seen *six* boys, the eldest hardly fourteen, handcuffed, in the custody of an officer of justice who was conducting them to a magistrate. An article in the news-paper, at the same time mentions *little school boys*, to the number of *nine*, going out in an evening to pick pockets, and of their having fold above sixty handkerchiefs at 4*d.* each.—I suppose part of the story is true: ought not such children to be punished by a temporary *solitary confinement*, with bread and water, to shew them the nature of their crime?—I was once concerned in detecting eight boys between 13 and 17. The eldest of them turned *evidence*: his companions were preserved by being sent to sea.—In their company, tho' not with their knowledge, he committed another robbery, for which I desired he might be prosecuted, and he was condemned to be *transported*, but died in prison.

It is amazing what a daring spirit reigns amongst us, from the cradle to the gallows; it has, however, a mixture of generosity, and only wants a *proper bias*.—Much the greater part of those who go to the gallows, are boys: I mean, that they are of the ages from sixteen to twenty-one, which in one view makes the case the more deplorable, for it seems as if their *reason* was not arrived at its maturity.

During the late war I had opportunities of seeing the different turn of boys from, several parts of these kingdoms. The further north they came from the soberer they seemed to be. In *Scotland* the parish minister, who

who always resides with his people, keeps a list of their names in a book, and visits them twice every year, at their own houses; so that he becomes perfectly acquainted with their persons, circumstances, religious knowledge, and morals.

I found many such young persons in the fear of God; when my poor young friends, in and about this metropolis, were in *no fear at all*. These had been trained, by the parochial clergy, from their infancy, to reverence the *Sabbath-day*; to speak truth; to honour their parents, their magistrates, and their teachers. If you ask me, how it fared with the others, with respect to our *clergy*, I must refer you to our *customs*, not to our *laws*; and to what is *practised*, not to what may be wished for, or *understood*. There was evidently no want of activity of person, good-nature, or native bravery in the *English* young mariner; and the few who had been under any decent tutelage, were docile, ingenuous, and perhaps equal to the youth of any part of the world. Many of them were, what we vulgarly call *good boys*; but in general *evil communication*, like a blast in the vegetable creation, which destroys the labours of the husbandman, had *smutted their morals*. Indeed I found many poor boys, particularly of these cities, in a very *sad condition*! Some, by the early loss of their parents; some, by being vagabonds, and in a habit of idleness; and others, by keeping the most wicked company, in the most wicked part of these kingdoms, were hardened in iniquity at a very early age.

Few of them had the good fortune of ever receiving any instruction—We had then an opportunity of employing 1200 to 1500 of such boys, as an annual recruit, as they advanced in manhood, or went from the king's, into the merchant's *service*; and all that were in want at the close of the war, were supplied. Now we are to think of the *instruction* and *employment* of much greater numbers, or they will teach each other to do *mischief*; they will forfeit their lives;—and the land will mourn!

But where are we to apply for redress?

1. What institutions have we for the regular discipline of those who are most exposed to danger?
2. What are the rules of such institutions?

3. How are such rules executed?
4. What improvements may be made in them, respectively?
5. Is any further legislative authority necessary to render them useful, and what is wanting?

To these questions we may add a few others, which are very important to us as subjects, citizens, men and christians.

6. Are we to look on as idle spectators; or will any of us step forth as the friends of God and their country, to keep those who are comparatively innocent prisoners, separated from atrocious criminals?

7. Shall we make no attempt to save the criminal from *himself*, that he may become innocent, preserving a tender parental regard to both kinds of prisoners, by "being merciful—as our Father in heaven is merciful?"

If you ask me how *justice* can be shewn, without *mercy*, joined to the wholesome severity of magisterial authority? I answer, "I know not: it is beyond my comprehension."

In this contemplation, the first object which presents itself to my eyes, is *Bridewell Hospital*. We are informed, that it received its name from being near a spring called *Saint Bridget's*, or *Saint Bride's-Well*. It is situated on the west side, near the entrance of *Black-friars Bridge*; and was anciently a royal palace. *Henry VIII.* on that spot built a magnificent house for the reception of the Emperor *Charles V.* In the subsequent reign *Edward VI.* presented the old palace of *Bridewell* to the city of *London*, as a lodging for poor travellers, and "way-faring people, likewise for the correction of vagabonds, barlots and idle persons, and for finding them work."

We may now with great propriety recur to the original institution, presuming that the building ought in reason to be appropriated to the purpose for which this prince intended it; the travellers excepted, Inns in abundance, in our days, being now provided for them.

Edward VI. also endowed this hospital with lands, then worth four hundred and fifty pounds per annum. At this time it is probable, from

the advanced price of lands, that the same revenue is amazingly augmented.

8. This circumstance also, is very necessary to be known to the public, which is deeply interested.

Besides the above endowment, the same prince gave to this hospital, the *revenues* and furniture of the *Savoy Hospital*.

9. What these were, and now are, and what donations have been given, in the course of two hundred years, are matters of serious concern, which the public have a right to be informed of; and which it is to be presumed no governor, who means to administer his trust with zeal and fidelity before God and men, will hesitate to comply with.

There may be no necessity for litigating the point. If the greatest probable good is performed, and justice done to the public by a voluntary act of the governors, more cannot be desired:—Being otherwise, I presume it will become the duty of *other* subjects, to *require* information,

1. What the corporation stands bound to?
2. If it ought to revert to the original appropriation of the local establishment?
3. What improvements in it reason and experience have taught us?
4. What is necessary to the execution?
5. If justice has been done to the poor, to our country, and our religion?
6. What plan is intended to be pursued hereafter.

In the mean while I must tell you, that in the reign of *Queen Elizabeth*, the city made use of *Bridewell Hospital* as a *store-house* for *coals*; and likewise as a granary, the poor being employed in *grinding of corn with hand-mills*. It was so long since as the reign of that princess, that the *arts-masters*, consisting, I believe, at that time, of different mechanics, were introduced into this house.

In 1666, the hospital was consumed by fire; and rebuilt in 1668, in the manner in which it now appears, except the front houses lately

built

built for the use of the treasurer and solicitor. The new building, it is said, cost *ten thousand pounds*: but this addition renders the premises so much the more respectable and valuable. I hope that sufficient room is left for the more essential purposes, of providing for the due correction of offenders, and what else belongs to the peace of the city and the common safety; which it may be also presumed, will be *hereafter* regarded with the tender circumspective eyes of good magistrates and faithful citizens.

The purpose for which the governors profess to employ the Hospital, is for the correction of *harlots, night-walkers, pick-pockets, vagrants, disobedient servants*, and such as are not to be reformed by the ordinary means of the authority of parents and masters. These are committed by the Lord Mayor or Aldermen. *Apprentices* are also sent by the *Chamberlain of London*. By the standing regulation the prisoners are obliged to beat hemp; and, supposing the nature of the offence to require it, they are *whipped*.—When I made this Hospital a visit, I did not discover that such rigid discipline was in use, except on extraordinary occasions. In more early days it might be presumed, that where labour began, vice ended.

This antient mansion is spacious (a); but the labour done in it contributes so little to reformation, the objects sent *out* from their imprisonment are generally reputed to be much less moral than when they came *into* it.

F 2

There

(a) It consists of two courts, in which the buildings are convenient, and not very irregular. The chapel has a square roof, and galleries on the north and west side, supported by columns of the *Tuscan* order, and the floor is paved with black and white marble. At the west-end, are places for the Hospital boys, and others for the prisoners. The wainscoting and finishing are very neat. The altar-piece is adorned with two pilasters, with their entablature, and a circular pediment of the *Corinthian* order; between which, the Commandments are done in gold, upon a black ground, and the Lord's prayer and the Creed, on a blue ground. These pieces are enriched with gilt cherubims, leaves and fruit, and placed in gilt frames. The court-room is adorned with columns of the composite order, with a gallery, and the names of all the benefactors to the Hospital, in gilt letters. There is a chair for the president, and convenient seats for the governors.

There can be no doubt but that, with good management, this Hospital might be rendered subservient to the great purposes of police; but there seems to be a necessity for the governors to delegate their power to some regular and responsible annual committee, a certain number of the former year to remain in office. If they all remain and elect themselves, there is danger of prostituting the Hospital to the servile purposes of a party interest. In any case, they must keep *trusty officers in regular pay* for the purpose of answering the ends of the charity.

Time and experience are the truest instructors of mankind. The public accounts of this Hospital tell us, that "All the affairs of it are managed by the governors, who are above three hundred, besides the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, all of whom are, by their office, governors of it." Bridewell and Bethlem Hospitals are said to be under one corporation; they have the same president and governors. Bridewell Hospital has its peculiar *steward, porter, matron, and four beadles*; the youngest of the last has the task of correcting the criminals.

With respect to the management of Bridewell, it is an object of importance to the public, to know,

1. Who really manages it?
2. How it is managed?
3. What the revenues of the Hospital amount to, distinguishing the part Bethlem has a title to?
4. What the revenue consists in, and the particulars thereof; and when any of the rents were raised, and what *finer* have been received?
5. Whether Bethlem has a sufficient supply?
6. How the revenue is appropriated, distinguishing the expence of Bethlem?
7. What the arts-masters consist of?
8. What is the annual cost of *arts-masters* and apprentices, and the particulars of this expence?
9. How many male and female criminals are brought in a year?
10. What care is taken to prevent offenders from returning to their former course of life?

11. What

11. What the charge and correction of the criminals, and petty delinquents amount to?

12. What other expences the corporation is at?

13. Why the governors do not make up their accounts; and pay off their debts quarterly?

14. What is the state of the last year's accounts of receipts, and disbursements?

I am a member of several corporations and fraternities: I recommend to your enquiry, nothing more than is constantly practised by all well-regulated communities. The public, I think, has a natural title to information—and it may be presumed, so respectable a body as this corporation, will rather choose to comply with a reasonable demand made by a governor, or a number of the governors, than draw the curtain of secrecy, and thus lay the foundation of jealousy, which may excite resentment, and fall the heavier in the issue.—My sincere meaning is, to add a lustre to the character and achievements of this corporation.

I humbly conceive, that the mode of investigating this object, will be, by the governors of this corporation, appointing *distinct committees* for the two Hospitals under them, tho' responsible, as they are, to one General Court. Whether this be done entirely from *house-lists*, or occasionally from others, may not be so material.

If all *fermented liquors* are injurious, in some degree, to the constitution of the natural body; *unnecessary contests* distress the œconomy of political institutions; but these being taken as phyfic, the dose not being too large, they frequently procure health and vigour.—This seems to be the case before us.

It is not to be imagined, that no one of the governors, *can* answer the questions which I make; but the number of those whose sleep is broken on this account, I believe is small. The *fact* is, that no one has had patriotism and resolution enough, actually to investigate the object, and become a sufficient master of its powers, so as to regulate them, to the
great

great and noble ends of the original institution. I say this from knowing that the present conduct of it is not agreeable to reason and experience, and the necessities of the present time.—If the spirit of *party* predominates over our religion and humanity, what can be expected, but anarchy?

If I were a master of the several facts, which my questions lead to, I might proceed in my proposals of amendments, with the greater accuracy and precision: Yet knowing what is *not* done, I will tell you my thoughts, in what manner I conceive the governors of this Hospital may acquire a title to the truest applause of their fellow-citizens, and by degrees prevent a great part of the terrors which surround us, from the dissoluteness of our manners, and the grievous want of *police*. By means of some alterations and additional building, the Hospital may be converted into apartments, for such chaste and solitary imprisonment, the prisoners will probably “*cease to do evil, and learn to do good.*” The governors may thus procure the blessings of their fellow citizens, to which, their present conduct, *respecting this object*, seems to give them no title. That they may lay the most solid foundation on which to build the hope of happiness, in the regions of immortal bliss, is my sincere prayer! *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R VII.

WE are not to suppose the *rigid discipline*, which once distinguished the *Spartan* or the *Roman* virtue, will become fashionable amongst us; but we may enjoy a more permanent state of earthly felicity, than those people could ever boast of. Our religion wears the face of joy!—Benevolence is the peculiar characteristic of it: and its highest hopes are founded in the exercise of the most consummate mercy! It looks up to the temples of immortality, and all the glories, which ever graced the renown of the truest and best friends to liberty and mankind, are tributary to it!

Such are the advantages presented by Providence to us, if we had eyes to bear the light that surrounds us.—Seeing that life is so short and uncertain, a wise man ought surely to endeavour to make the best of it; and render his *convivial* pleasures and amusements, subservient to the improvement of the rectitude of his will, the purity of his affections, and his benevolence to mankind.

Of all the amusements, which we are fond of, the *STAGE* seems to be incomparably the most *manly*; yet if it is not restrained by the sacred considerations of our religion, and social obligations, it can claim no high applause. When calculated to mend the heart, as well as delight the fancy, we ought to hold it in the highest esteem: when directed to the ends of virtue, it is *venerable*! But we find all *pompous shews* require a strict eye: the most magnificent are the more dangerous, as those of antient *Rome* seem to prove. Within the compass of my memory, the *Theatre* deserved no better name, than a *polished scene of lewdness*: very few actors, or actresses, were renowned for making offerings at the shrine of *chastity*.

Happily

Happily we now find it, *comparatively*, much more chastised and pure. We have seen of late years the *son of a prelate*, devote his leisure hours to *dramatic* writing; in which we behold the *christian* and *philosopher*, the *scholar*, the *gentleman*, and the *man of taste*, acquainted with the world, and the manners of it.—The tender husband, the parent and the friend, combining their powers, in the character of an author; theatrical representations may be formed to make a very lasting impression on the mind, in favour of virtue.

Every writer, whose talents are of this kind, should aspire at more, than *amusing* his audience. In common life, he that makes us laugh most, is not the person, whom we the most respect, but is frequently lowest in our esteem.

Moliere, it is said, ridiculed the *French* out of some of their fopperies. Whether our fops are the most docile part of the king's subjects, or the most inclined to part with their feminine fancies, is not very much in point, with regard to the present question; but my *partiality* leads me to think, there is so strong a mixture of good sense, in the composition of *British* subjects, much may be expected from it. May not our *understandings* be brought to as true a relish of solid and useful *instruction*, as our *imaginations* are susceptible of delight from scenes, properly adapted to them.

It was said twenty or thirty years ago, that if the stage were rendered *chaste*, it would cease to be the object of our amusement. Mr. *Garrick's* good sense, has proved this to be a fond conceit:—not but there are several comedies yet exhibited, by no means fit, in all their parts, for the entertainment of *Christians*, whether these be more or less *polished* in their manners. This *abuse* of the Theatre remains to be corrected.

Whether the author's *muse* be of *tragic*, or of *comic* birth, her business should be,

“ To make mankind in conscious virtue bold,

“ Live o'er each scene, and be, what they behold.”

If his taste be for *tragedy*, he may remember in behalf of virtue,

"For this the *tragic muse* first trod the stage,

"Commanding tears to flow through ev'ry age!"

And if men of the most *brutal* dispositions, can be moved with pity and compassion, by the *fiction*s of the stage: if such has been the power of theatrical representation; upon this principle, *dramatic* writers ought never to exhibit any scene, that can possibly tend to hurt the cause of virtue. They should take the *important* office of *teaching* us how to walk in the strait path of life; and whilst they *amuse*, captivate us with a love of virtue, and the charms of religion. From them, as from *living examples*, brought level to our senses, and the objects of every faculty of the soul, we might learn to regulate our passions; subdue our prejudices and false opinions; and, whether contending with the storms of adversity, or sailing on with a prosperous gale, steer our course through life with steadiness.

Life is chequered with good and evil: the author who knows what it is, finds a vast field to range in, especially if his imagination be as strong, as his judgment is sound.—But the first lesson he should learn, is to entertain a good opinion of his *audience*, and to *flatter* them into a belief, that they love virtue, equally with *himself*: tho' they should neither *laugh* nor *weep*, they will be pleased, when they feel themselves deeply interested. If the *fear* of shame and punishment, or the *hope* of honour and reward, operates on their minds, they will study how to correct their *evil*, and improve their *good* propensities. As *men*, and as *christians*, born to such high expectations, they will see, that they can with no consistency ever lose sight of their religion! To suppose this plan would contract the author's field of action, is comprehending but little of the human soul: for surely he may expand himself more, having *two* worlds to range in, than being confined only to *one*. And if his mind is enriched with *faith* in the *sacred writings*, it will give *strength* and *lustre* to his *genius*, and *charms* to his *humanity*.

How shall we divide the man from himself? A friend to his country, and not to God the great protector of his country! It is a contradiction

in terms. But taking up the argument on the ground of virtue, and the sacred regards which we owe to our *religion*, we must descend to the *daily* lessons we should learn, for the conduct of our lives. It is not great actions which interest mankind so much as *domestic* and *relative* duties: I was never yet present at a theatrical representation, in which, in some scene or other, it did not appear that nature was deserted, or common sense put to the rack, that place might be given to a poetical conceit; the introduction of a favourite sentiment; or an event, to make out the plot. If I am not an accurate observer, my proposition for the *useful*, instead of the *brilliant*, stands on the foundation of friendship for mankind.

“But whither, my friend, will you carry us? would you have us give up all the charms of *that sweet child of fancy*?—Is the philosopher of nature to be rejected?—Is all the majesty of his sentiments to be laid by, as useless?” No: I only beg leave to say, that the best play *Shakespeare* ever wrote, where the humour relates to the peasant, to make us laugh; or the *sentiment* to the *prince*, to strike us with a pleasing wonder of the comprehensive genius of the author, may not be so well adapted to the *instruction* of the audience, as a piece in other respects much inferior. The play which does them the most good is, with respect to them, the *best* performance. The man who makes a *horse-shoe*, is a greater friend to society, than he that only makes watches fit to be worn in a ring.—We must judge according to the wants of a people, with regard to *instruction*, and the principles and ability of the author who is to give it—The same talents cannot always answer different ends: in general, the *good* depends on the application of the mind to *good*. There are many who do not write for bread: could they lay aside the vanity of the author, and the desire of pleasing persons of the *highest taste*, they would figure higher as friends to mankind.

How many authors might have employed the same talents more powerfully, to the great end and purpose of exploring the recesses of the heart; and following the *man*, not into his closet only, but into every scene which the world might call upon him to act in; and as an advocate for the exercise

of reason, contend for the glory of human nature. However frequent and arduous the contest, *reason* should stand its ground: how strongly soever the *passions* may strive for *victory*, *reason* should be honoured with a *triumph*! The author should prove, in every character, whatever inequalities may be found, that man is a *reasonable and accountable being*. If the writer is of a contrary opinion, his productions will be no *blessing* to mankind. They may afford pleasure to the *palate*, but they will poison the *heart*.

“You do not go to the play to be *instructed*.” No: but will you decline going, because you are instructed? It is still an assembly of human faces: it has light, music, scenery, dress and decoration; add *sense*, and you will make out a pleasing entertainment. I will go further, and venture to say, that if any man were reputed to read the *Proverbs* with more accuracy, and by his tone and expression, throw stronger and truer lights upon them, than any one was ever known to do before, the *taste* of some, and the *curiosity* of vast numbers of the people, would carry them to the Play-house to hear him.—If this is in any degree true, and I say it to the honour of the people, let the sentiments of an author be fruitful in nervous sense, expressed in elegant language: let them interest the heart with regard to *both worlds*: let them mark out, in legible characters, the true lineaments of human life, in the parts *most useful*; and one might venture to pronounce, they would attract the ear of the audience. I grant many frequent the *Theatre*, who seek only mere amusement; and that some would be displeased, if they had no motive to laugh, nor weep; yet if it were *the fashion*, they would go again to the play.

“But will common life, such as you are recommending, furnish a sufficient *variety*?” Let the author embellish his characters with all the graces he can consistently bestow, beyond the common level; let memory and judgment distinguish them; let some have taste and fancy: but of what *use* is the *idol* of a *dramatic* writer, to the *generality* of mankind? If he presses *wit* into his service, and determines to make her play tricks, or over-act her part, it is a prostitution to an *unprofitable taste*; and oftentimes the way to render her offensive to *reason*, *nature*, and the tenderness of the heart of one human being towards another.

It seems to be a truth generally allowed by all the guardians of the peace, and the conservators of the little *police* we enjoy, that the *Beggars Opera* has a very pernicious tendency; particularly at this time: one of the magistrates, has remonstrated strongly against its being acted. On the principle I am reasoning, I consider it as the *worst* dramatic piece in our language. If it affords much delight to *thieves* and *barlots*, it does *mischief*. As conveying no solid good or *useful* instruction, it should not be acted, though it abounds in the wit of a celebrated cynical and *political* satyrift, and was once in high esteem with those who called themselves the polite world.

George Barnwell is a representation more interesting, and in some instances more *instructive* to the generality of those, on whom we depend for our *safety* and *happiness*, than the finest tragedy or comedy we can boast of. It pleases a considerable part of the people; yet, if I remember right, there is no attempt in any one scene to make us *laugh*. I do not recollect there is any *wit* in it: but *good sense* renders it more intrinsically valuable than the glitter of *wit*. The events are *familiar* and *natural*, and in no respect foreign to common life, except the *murder*, and this is as much beyond probability, as it is short of *humanity*. The idea of *parricide*, should have arrested the author's pen. If he had not suffered so foul a deed to be perpetrated, his piece would have been more complete, as being more instructive. Young men may be tempted to think their conduct, however dangerous to themselves and society, is not dreadful if they avoid so horrible a crime; and that, upon the comparison, *their* behaviour may stand fair. A thousand may be found, in *real life*, ensnared by a *wicked* woman, to commit gross offences, and yet revolt with horror, at the thought of so *diabolical* an action!—Here I would have saved *poor human nature* from disgrace; and supposed that the highest degree of *insanity* and *wickedness* could not prompt a young man to imbrue his hands in a parent's blood, on any consideration!—*George* is represented as having been once a lad of a good disposition, therefore the making him commit such an action is the more glaring absurdity.

“ But

“But has not the introduction of such scenes been the constant practice of the stage, in all ages, and in *all* countries?” I believe not *in all*. In *France* the drama is more chaste and moral, notwithstanding the supposed levity of that nation.—Whether this arises from the zeal their religion inspires, or from their not enjoying such liberty as ours; they seem to act most consistently, with regard to the great design of the *Theatre*. It may be questioned, as we have managed it, if it has not, in its consequence, done harm to an hundred, for one who has been really benefited by it. What good can we derive from the present plan, or how can the stage mend our morals, but as it is stript of its impurities? The *christian* precepts admonish us not to suffer any *idle*, much less *impure* words, or unchaste conceits; I might add, extravagant folly of passion, to be *once named* amongst us. What then shall we say of many of our dramatic entertainments? Are they *manly* and *dignified*? Do they prove our *superiority* over slaves and sycophants? If we are servile adulators of the *times*, and even laugh at the base disposition, either of the *lord*, or his footman, we degrade ourselves.

Let the author whose powers can be employed in the service of his country, enter into *higher*, or *lower* scenes of life, as his story may lead him: the more historical the piece, the greater delight will it generally afford. Let him give the major part of his characters such a moral and religious cast, and such a memory of their *reading*, as well as of what they have seen and heard, in their passage through life, as may enable him to introduce the most pleasing scenes and interesting narrations.

How delighted we naturally are by the report of *generous* actions! In spite of the weakness of the heart, on these occasions, *envy* hides her hollow eyes, and shrinks back discountenanced: in spite of our corruption we applaud, and secretly rejoice, that human nature supports its dignity in the person whose panegyric we have heard.

Life itself is at best but a *twice-told tale*! What are our most admired theatrical pieces beyond the sentiment, when we are acquainted with the plot, and know what we are to expect? Make the *story interesting*, the *dialogue*, in skilful hands, will be rendered *pleasing*. Let the events

be natural, without straining the invention beyond the bounds of probability. Let there be *solid truth* even in *fable*; and common life will produce *good*: at present, however proper the design of the Theatre, it may be much doubted if any *real good* be done, to the *generality* of the audience, beyond the *amusement*.

Christian doctrines do not favour a *stoical* apathy; but they restrain the violence of all passion: why should we, *being christians*, delight to behold the soul tortured with *passion*, to the degree of despair and death! We admire the *marvellous*, but we should shudder at the *horrible*! If we mean to be *happy*, we should seek to be *wise*. *Candour* itself will sometimes excite *laughter*, and we are sure there will be no want of *distress* to make us *weep*! But let us strive to render the stage subservient to the great purpose of learning how to *live*, and how to *die*!

Methinks I should be gratified in the instructive part of a theatrical representation, were I to see *my own heart* uncovered and laid fairly open, granting that I should certainly discover many more *black spots*, than I had fondly imagined to be in it. If my good qualities were likewise represented, so as to render them more lovely to myself, and induce me to be more joyful, than the view in which I had ever seen them, would permit, might it not also serve to keep me from *despair*; and balancing the account, leave me *rich*, at least in the sweet comforts of *balmy hope*!

Every human imperfection cannot be *decently* disclosed; but each may supply from his own stock of common sense and sensibility, whatever is wanting; and by *looking into himself*, behold how much he stood in need of the *instruction* which he sought as a part of his *amusement*. Thus blending the *sweet* and the *useful*, in the most important views of life; *life* itself might derive new charms from the experiment.

The *moral endowments* of this nation, stand in a high rank! If our reigning follies will not bear the test of a strict theatrical examination from a *satyrical muse*; yet surely the *genius of compassion* may be allowed to weep. Taking the candid side, in the comparative view of the people of the several nations I have lived amongst, our good qualities may yet
have

have a title to be represented with honour: If we follow the plan *most useful*, we may rather endeavour to flatter ourselves into a greater love of virtue, than with a malignant eye, mark out the characters which *disgrace us*!

Upon this principle, it may be wished that our dramatic writers would study the *science of life*, in the most *useful parts*; the variety of characters, which may compose it; and the arrangement of them, in the manner tending most to *instruction*. Scenes which *disgrace human nature*, should shock the spectator; they can seldom be of use: They rather *wound* the mind, than *heal* its maladies. Some *parts* must be *dark*, to serve as *shades* to place the principal figures to advantage; but why should we seek for *horror*?

Many of our *dramatic* pieces abound in fine sentiments; but these generally apply to the most exalted characters, in the *highest* parts of life; how do they interest *me*, who move in a *much lower sphere*?

With regard to the benefits which may be derived from the Theatre, let us consider that an actor makes no figure who has not a *proper utterance*. The choice of persons is the more contracted from the profession being deemed *illiberal*: I wish to see it so modelled, that gentlemen of education might engage in it. Let the stage contribute to the benefit of mankind, in the views I am now contemplating, it will rise with a superior dignity, in proportion as it pleads for the *justice due to human nature*; and the glorious hopes of immortality! The object of the actor would thus be realized; and tho' some parts might be fictitious, they would be only parabolically so, and the utterance would give it the force of *reality*. The other day I asked a very young lady "if she did not weep when she was present at the *Distress'd Mother*?" She answered, No: and gave as a reason, that she knew it was *only a play*. I concluded, it was ill-acted; or that she who had strong sense, was not of the melting mood, or not yet arrived to the period of her sensibility. May not even the pulpit borrow *graces* from the stage; and the great doctrines of immortality, the more easily take the soul by storm?

The.

The usual language of tragedy is not so fit for *common life* as that of *comedy*; but real life is a *tragi-comedy*. *True speaking* is always *harmorous*: the more politeness and elegance of expression, we find in the mouths of those who are *supposed* to have had the education of a gentleman, and the more pleasing the manner, it is obvious the more it will recommend the sentiment, and the deeper impression it will make.

Thus, the good government of the lower classes of the people, might receive a very great and essential advantage; and the stage be tributary to the improvement of their morals; and consequently to the *police* of their country. The middle ranks, who perhaps *too often* attend theatrical representations, are so linked in the chain of society, whatever they learnt, would be gradually communicated to their inferiors; and descending into the hearts of the indigent, and distress'd, render them *happy*, as it made them *wise*.

The story, which the *honest tradesman*, or *master-mechanic*, heard related at the *Play-house*, would have as true a title to make a part of his conversation, as any historical narration of *real facts*; and would tend as much to improve the manners of *his* audience. And why should not the history of *real life*, with the change of names, the facts not being so recent as to offend, be introduced? Combine a number of well-chosen events, which happen every day; and they will make a tale more interesting to the generality of the audience, than the pious conduct of a *Tamerlane*, or the haughty rage of a conquered *Bajazet*.

Independent of our *obligations* to the practice of virtue, we might pride ourselves in having so *entertaining a school*, where we learn the *manly* and the *godlike* duties, of giving eyes to the blind; feet to the lame; bread to the hungry, and instruction to the ignorant; with what else belongs to justice towards man, and piety towards his maker. *Here* we might see *living* examples, tho' it were an emblem of life, for one poor hour strutting on the stage; and learn how to prefer such duties, to the mean gratifications of a splendid table; the puerile flutter of magnificent dress; or the fondest exultation which a sumptuous equipage can raise in the breast of a rich young heir.

Upon

Upon *this plan* the author will *feel* his subject, in the degree that he writes from *principle*, and the knowledge of those parts of life, which it may be presumed he is better acquainted with, than he is of the sentiments of *princes*. Any man of sense and education may form some idea what a *king* would say to his *consort*; but it is probable nature would be more displayed, in an epistle to his own wife whom he tenderly loved. By parity of reason, a man of *genius* may make a better figure, when once the taste of his audience is properly formed, by steadily pursuing the plan in question. I am supposing it better adapted to the cause of virtue, than the *buskin'd champion*, who has so long "strutted his hour upon the stage," and might as well have not been heard at all, with respect to the fruits of his *heroic labours*.

Whatever the event may be, *my* author must teach *critics* to applaud in the *right place*, regarding the instruction of numbers who are as nearly related to him, and plunged as deep in the filth of *ignorance*, as those are distressed who have a redundancy of *refined* knowledge. He must not be anxious how he shall excite an impatience for the *catastrophe*; amaze by unexpected incidents; or force us into *laughter*. The humour of particular characters may please; but to model them for *imitation*, will be his glory!—Nor is it of so much moment to give pictures of a *finished gentleman*, or an *accomplished lady*, these being too rare in life, to merit so much labour from the pen, as many other real *valuable* characters, we find in it.

Will it not be glorious for *him* who can teach us best how to exercise our *reason*, and by shewing the inconstancy and inconsistency of the mind, guard us against the *deceits of the passions*; give us lessons of *patience* and *purity*, and point out the relative duties of *domestic life*? Proper examples of *imitation* exhibited on the stage would tend more to the improvement of *reason*, and give higher charms to the beauties of humanity, than characters which are very *high*, or very *low*; very *singular* and *uncommon*, or very wicked. Whilst we improve our reason, the corrections received from the secret workings of *divine grace and favour*, will afford us new powers; and we should learn that which is morally impossible for us to acquire, on the present plan of *theatrical*

representations: if these rather tend to *destroy*, than to *improve* our morals, shall we go on without thinking of any alteration?

I think you will acknowledge that such a reform of the Theatre is become highly *necessary*. We are not arrived at the mature age of *dramatic* writing, upon a plan of moral and christian philosophy, suited to the illumined period of our solid learning and intellectual endowments. The religion and prevailing knowledge of a country must necessarily determine what the stage ought to be. If it is in no remarkable degree distinguished for prophaneness, the *state* will take no cognizance of our *wasting our time*, or employing it *childishly*: but the just application of the talents of an able dramatic writer, might render it as subservient to the true interest of a polite and intelligent christian nation, as the pulpit, which regulated in the best manner imaginable, is calculated for the greater purpose of inspiring the soul of man, with a sure and certain hope of immortal glory in a life to come! Upon this principle, the clergy of a well-disciplined people should interest themselves, in the strongest manner, for the maintenance of the *Theatre* in its true use and dignity.—Let this, among other objects of *police*, have a share in your thoughts, and try your influence that such a design may be *really* accomplished.

Thus have I brought my conceits into one point of view as they arose spontaneously. Whether *you* may think them indigested, or not, I must confess, they were no part of my plan when I first sat down to write to you; but providentially I was led to consider the state of the stage as a part of *police*; and I am persuaded that a plan or design of a moral conduct, should be deemed essential to the *police of a free, enlightened country*, and an effect of the most improved *civilization*, in every nation.

I shall hardly forget the conversation I once had with a *fair deluder*, of that sisterhood, which nightly wears the pavement under *Somerset-house*. She accosted me with the usual salutation of asking for *wine*—"Without *Ceres* and *Bacchus*, *Venus* grows cold."—Her appearance was such, no man of sentiment could treat with disdain.—I answered, "Wine,

“ my girl! I will give you a much better thing: I will deliver you
 “ out of the *dreadful* situation in which you seem to be!” Pray,
 Sir, what will you do? “ I will put you in a method of saving your
 “ *body* and your *soul* from destruction!” *Body* she had an idea of, but
 as to *soul*, it was not in her system. I told her where she might retreat,
 if I could happily succeed in obtaining her admission.—She answered,
 “ I thank you, Sir, it is time enough for *That*: I have good
 “ clothes—And—I can go to a play whenever I please.”—Thus was
 this poor creature, among *thousands* of such wretched beings, swim-
 ming swiftly to her grave, and God knows to what other place, buoyed
 up by a female vanity of external appearance, and the dissipation
 she found in a *Play-house*, where I presume she was a *favourite* to
 some under-actor!—

Now, Sir, let the *Play-house* change the scene: Make it a school
 of *moral* and *christian* philosophy—Let it be chaste, as well as *in-
 teresting* to the heart.—Suppose the very scene, in which I was engaged
 in the street, represented on the Theatre—Let such objects, as pierce the
 hearts of some with the arrows of compassion, and of others with dif-
 ferent impressions, become the pupils of an able *dramatic* writer, a *good
 man* and a *christian*, as *all writers* ought to be, and what may not his
 pen accomplish! Let him form to himself an idea of an *accountable
 being*, degraded below the animal, that perishes! Follow her from the
Brothel, or the *Theatre*, to her chamber—See her over-whelmed with
 complicated misery: her vital powers exhausted at the early age of
 twenty-one, expiring, unregarded, as the *disgrace* of human nature!
 You look thoughtful!—Try if you, who have probably many more
 years to walk upon this globe, than I expect, can gratify the *piety*
 and *humanity* of the heart, and help to reform the world! Let *critics*
 judge as they please, as to the portion of *comic force*, or degree of the
pathos, proper to render a dramatic piece complete: I plead for *virtue*.
 Let the standards of antient *Greece*, or *Rome*, or *Athens*, be as they may,
 our *common sense*, and the necessity of *our times*, require every aid to
 give our minds a relish of moral rectitude. Farewell.

LETTER VIII.

SHALL you think it an absurd transition? In search of *regulations of Police*, and the happy mode of preventing blood and rapine, I passed from *Bridewell-Hospital* to the *Theatre*, and took a view, to see how it might be most honourably employed. May I not return to *Bridewell*, for the same pious intention?

Some, in pursuit of *their* pleasures, go to the *Theatre*: others, in search of their gratifications, are *sent* to *Bridewell*. The young harlot, who figured yesterday in a green box, may sleep to night under confinement in *Bridewell*. She may sometimes learn good at a play, were her heart ever inclined to good: in *Bridewell* she can never learn any. In the comprehensive view, both *Bridewell* and the *Theatre* may contribute to *preserve*, or to *destroy* our morals, just as they are managed.

However faulty the fictitious scene may be, the real *Bridewell* stands much in need of *correction*; the former must be free; the latter calls for assistance from a coercive power. In both cases, customs and prejudices have in some degree enslaved our minds. The *voice* of the people is said to be the voice of God; it may be so sometimes, and with regard to the wiser part of us; but if our *practices* are diabolical, we must change them.

The expedient which I recommend as a *cure*, for offences subject to death, I propose as the salutary mode of *preventing* evil. *Solitary imprisonment*, with the difference of time, place, and other distinctions, which the nature of crimes may require, is the object of my lucubrations.

By *prevention*, I understand the *chastisement* of *such* as are criminal enough to call for the authority of the magistrate: Among these,

I account the *young women* the most pitiable, who are usually sent to *Bridewell Hospital*.

The ideas of an *Hospital* and a *malefactor*, are *incongruous*; but let us endeavour to make this *prison* a genuine and effectual *reformatory*, instead of its being, like our other prisons, a school for learning to be wicked. The shortest and most effectual way of eradicating all the plants of moral rectitude, which yet remain among the noxious weeds that grow in this uncultivated soil, the hearts of the common people, is to send them to *Bridewell*.

There is not perhaps a stronger evidence of the depravity of human nature, than in the ordinary conduct of men, who have been the seducers of women, or partners in their iniquity. To see the greater punishment inflicted on the lesser criminal, is a circumstance, against which the natural rectitude of the heart revolts. In the sight of the supreme Legislator, whom it is the perfection of man to imitate, such cannot be the measure of distributive justice.

When I behold the aggressor ride by, in the triumph of successful vice, it is not so wonderful, as that the object, whom he seduced by the arts of flattery, should by the force of her vanity and weakness, or by stratagem and fraud, be condemned to imprisonment, to communicate with a number of spirits much more wicked than herself! This is a subject of horror!

Men of sentiment never can be idle spectators of such deviations from the apparent rights of human nature, and the soundest principles of freedom. The conduct of the Saviour of mankind, in commiserating the circumstances of the *female criminal*, is very remarkably exhibited as a pattern: it was an appeal to the *consciences* of the spectators: according to the law of *Moses*, she was to be stoned to death; but *Christ* appealed to the standers-by, if any *innocent* person could accuse her? Here then is the line drawn by the great prophet of the *christian* world, for the *guide of men*, in all succeeding generations. In such cases, the extremity of justice may prove an evil.

“ But the *female* exposes her own transgression, by the repetition of her crime, under the horrible circumstances of promiscuous commerce!” I grant it is shocking; but what is it, in effect, more than the habit in the *male* offender, when he gives himself up to the guidance of his appetite? We have no other name for him in our language, than a profligate, or debauchee, or vulgarly a whoremaster. If he is not as much restrained by *reason* and *religion*, surely we should endeavour to give the *female* criminal fair play, by teaching her what *reason* and *religion* require.

To connive at trespasses of this kind, would degrade the soul: to carry resentment, beyond what the *Christian* doctrine allows, is iniquity! What shall we say?—The task is difficult; but the arts of persuasion, to return to a sense of native purity, must, in the nature of things, be more efficacious than the conduct which renders the offender *desperate*.

Treat a woman, young in age, and not old in sin, as a *felon*, her sense of shame will be extinguished: she will be tempted to look on herself as the *outcast* of human nature: she will continue to sin without controul: her heart will be petrified: she will grow indifferent to all events, caring not how soon, or in what manner, she leaves a world, where she finds so little mercy, and such unrelenting severity against her!

In regard to the lower classes of the people, in fixing the measure of our compassion, we must not lose sight of their *penury*. When we consider the ignorance, in which they are often bred: when we view the conduct of some parents, who are appointed by nature the guardians of virgin purity, and by the decree of the great Father of mankind, their defenders: when these, with sacrilegious infamy, offer up their children at the infernal shrine of prostitution, all the witchcraft of idolatry does not appear more horrible! If he that saveth a soul from perdition, shall shine as the stars of Heaven, can our true self-love slumber or sleep, when called forth by so powerful an incentive? That virtue often rewards herself in this world, is no less demonstrable

ble in the preservation of every subject; and in general, the health of the body, and the purity of the soul, keep pace with each other.

To apply these general principles to the young females, who the magistrate usually sends to *Bridewell Hospital*; how many had far better been sent to their parents, with a strict injunction, to teach them the fear of God. If the parent has no such fear, which is often the case, let the magistrate act the part of a father and a friend, a friend to God, and *his* instrument in shewing the true affection of a father. To go into a laboured proof, *which the laws do not require*, that a man is a *thief*, or a woman a *harlot*, is bad policy. The human heart being constituted as it is, must be not only commiserated but flattered; and every lenient art employed to recover it again to a sense of dignity. To say that the magistrate travels in the ways of iniquity, and feels the offences of prisoners only in the hackney'd track of office, is making him a bad compliment: it supposes, that the christian, the philosopher, and even the *man*, is grown callous and impenetrable!

What is it we intend, when we *clearly comprehend our meaning*, but to support the *religion of Christ*, if we *believe* in it; and to *obey* the laws of our country, by the best methods we can, if we intend to preserve our country. Now let us see what the conduct of *Bridewell Hospital* is, and what it should be.—

Those who are acquainted with the horrible devastation of *life* and *morals*, created by these "*Bevies of fair Atheists*," will see what an abomination they are in a *Christian* land; not that I know of any *Christian* land wherein they do not abound; but with *us* they add impudence to prostitution, and render their condition the more deplorable, as they are more apt to become *thieves* and *drunkards*, as well as *prostitutes*. But men are the first transgressors, and the cruel cause of these deadly effects. If it is chiefly by the temptation of the woman, that the more flagitious wickedness is perpetrated, let us still consider who debauched her mind. Many unwary youths fall victims to a loathsome disease, or an early death on the gallows, as it were by the law of *retaliation*.

retaliation, or distributive justice! In every instance, it is high time we should think of *improving our police*.

The lawless commerce of the sexes, in all ages has been a subject of complaint; but it is to be presumed the more our *infidelity* abounds, the more will this vice predominate. And whilst *wealth* is the chief object of our pursuit, and the *vanity of shew*, of which it is the parent, so much the *idol* we adore, we must not be surpris'd to see such numbers of the gentry, and superior classes of the trafficking world, remain in a state of *celibacy*. Whether this is more prevalent than in times past, I know not: but I know that if there is a God who governs the earth, his forbearance to punish the sins of a nation, is no proof that he will *never* vindicate the eternal justice of his laws. If *his commandments* cease to have any influence on our lives, the *glory* of our country must be *tarnished*, if not its light *extinguished*!

To talk of *fornication* as a sin, or a breach of the *Christian institution*, is become an *uncouth* expression, to those not bred up in an observance of the duties required by it. How few young men are kept in awe, except by their apprehension of *disease* or *death*, or the offence they may give to those on whom they depend for their support! And as to *females*, it is no less melancholy a truth, that the *lower classes* most easily become a prey. Hence arises a great part of the evil: for if liberty, as we use it, puts so many criminals out of our reach, the effects in the lowest parts of life must be *deadly*. Our *vices* mutually assist each other; and in nothing more than in *prostitution*. We are bound to consider what is due upon the principles of *justice* and *mercy*. In the comprehensive view of the nature of our crimes and the causes of them; if he who hath the greater sin is countenanced, it will be difficult to get at the true measure of *police*.

We make florid harangues to magistrates, complaining of an unbounded toleration of common prostitutes. The zealous recommend that such *abandoned* wretches may be *apprehended* and brought before *these distributors of justice*: For what? "That they may not spread their baneful
" wiles,

“wiles, for the destruction of *unwary youth*, basking in infamy, in open “day, in our public streets.” They complain that the impudence of such persons increases with their numbers, in violation of all the laws of common decency. The magistrate is reminded, that every parent is alarmed for his sons, and every guardian and master, for the youth committed to their care, lest these abandoned syrens should seduce them to commit violence on our lives and properties.—But what can such applications avail? If *correction* does not include *instruction*; if such misery is not relieved, by the *wisdom* and *charity* of the *magistrate*; we are *playing at justice*, we are doing injustice.

We were told last *Christmas*, “that a number of disorderly women “were sent for the *next fourteen days* to be kept confined till after the “Holidays, then to be passed to their several parishes, so that the *proper* “provision might be made for them *after their punishment*.”

What a representation is this, of a plan of discipline, humane œconomy, and salutary regulation! A punishment of confinement for *fourteen days*, till the apprentice shall return to his work! Let us grant that at a dangerous period, the most care is to be taken. Do we not know that there is but a small number of masters, *in these days*, who *will* or *can* keep their apprentices within doors in the evening, when their shops are shut? How they can go abroad without money; and how they get money, is the dark and mysterious part of the story: but to suppose, that after these *fourteen days* their appetites will be lulled to sleep, and that these daughters of jollity, being set at liberty, without the least *instruction*, or *any method* taken to put them in a way of getting their bread honestly, will be less inclined to vice in *Westminster*, than they were in *London*; or that they *will* go, and *will remain* in their parishes, twenty or an hundred miles distant from the metropolis; is a supposition so peurile and absurd, it makes one blush? Is such a conduct worthy of a nation pretending to wisdom or humanity? Shall we go on in the same path? Shall we prove that we are *playing at police*, and acting as if we thought ourselves interested, that the people should be *no better* than they are; and that the preservation of *souls*, or the loss of subjects to the state, is no object? Some method must be adopted consistent

in its nature, and that promises fair to *preserve* at least a portion of these unhappy beings.

Let those who complain of the magistrate, or the magistrate himself who means to perform his duty, think of a plan more consistent than that which I recommend, and I shall rejoice in the *good* that is done, let who will do it. In the mean while I mourn at the *evil* we suffer, so much the more as we neglect the remedy which humanity and common sense dictate.

Not contented with bare reports, though entertaining no particular jealousy; in the beginning of 1772, among other public prisons, I visited *Bridewell-Hospital*. The first object which excited my attention, was to find so small a number of prisoners, as *six* men, and *two* boys; and women about *thirty*. I began to congratulate my guide on the success of the governors, when he checked the triumphs of my heart, by informing me the major part of the *evil doers*, who usually had been the objects of *Bridewell*, were now sent to *Newgate*. The subject was too serious to admit of any *sarcastical* remark, or I might have asked, how many of them had been *at school in Bridewell to qualify themselves for this promotion*? It was evident the petty offences of many were grown into crimes of the first magnitude; whence I could not but suspect the governors, or the *directors of the governors* of this Hospital, had been themselves carried down the stream of *custom*, without making any great effort to prevent the objects of their care, from being dragged into the vortex of iniquity.

What good can come of an evil practice, as ill adapted to the amendment of a perverse generation, as *folly* to correct the unwise, or *intemperance* to recover health. Let us change the *scene*, and if we can do that which will convince the prisoner, it is meant to treat him with mercy by warring against his *crimes*, and not against his person, it will produce a new system; and so far as it goes, establish a *salutary police*; for want of which, particularly in these cities, we have now so much reason to mourn.

It is generally supposed in the case of young offenders, that before they are brought to a magistrate, who it is imagined will order a commitment to *Bridewell*, that every other expedient has been first tried, which the authority of a parent or master can extend to—But alas! either from ignorance, or the want of consideration, the punishment of *solitary imprisonment* has been tried only in a very few instances. We have two prisons, which I shall give you some account of, where a small number of solitary apartments are used to great advantage, and the cure of the delinquents wrought in a few days, to the wonder of the beholder, while public shame *only hardens the mind*.

In mitigation of the offences which frequently happen, it may be observed, that where the temper of the master or mistress is unhappy, great allowance must be made for the apprentice. Many a young person would rather *perish*, than submit under certain circumstances; and yet may agree with a master of a different disposition.

Men of the best minds, often err by thinking too well of human nature, in the persons of some who *disgrace* it: but is not this a less dangerous mistake, than thinking so ill of it, as to lose sight of the duties of our religion? If we do not maturely consider the cause of an offence, as well as the offence itself, our sentences will probably be often defective. The force of example, with which we are daily conversant, must be remembered, as well as the inherent corruption of the heart, for which we are so ill able to account.—In the current of man's crimes, many pass down the stream of life unobserved, which in the sight of God, are high offences! Other deviations, in the eyes of men who are unbribed by any partial regards, appear too deeply coloured with guilt to bear the light; and yet the world gives them countenance. Let us endeavour to brighten our own prospect by assisting others to purge off their foul humours, and take a clear view of the *life to come*.

That the *fear of God*, is the beginning of *wisdom*, is not more true, than that *not fearing him*, is the beginning of *folly*. If only the fear of the gallows, or the apprehensions of evils after death, can be expected to produce a right conduct, what shall we say of numbers of *young persons*,

who have been so *unfortunate*, as that neither their parents nor masters appear to have taken any care of their morals; not even to give them a dread of *temporal punishments*! And as to a sense of religion, how could they have any, no endeavour being used to influence them by motives, drawn from the spring of all authority and law, and the last object of our hopes and fears, with respect to both worlds? Under such circumstances, how can they be expected to act with any consistency? What I say, is from my heart and *experience*, not from a fondness for declamation.

Such being the defects of many parents and masters, our spiritual guides and magistrates must supply the want, or with sorrow I must say, themselves also become *criminals*. If the greatest *strength* is not applied, where the greatest *weakness* appears, what proof can we give of *public* or *private* virtue? If the indulgence of the heart and understanding, in the mercy shewn to such fellow-creatures, is the essence of moral and divine philosophy; if our blessed Lord visited mankind, expressly declaring, that he came to *call sinners to repentance*, is not every kind of malefactor the chief object of our religious concern? Not to endeavour to prevent such from returning to *evil*, and guard the *present* and *future* generation from the *dreadful* consequences of such examples, is in effect, *I will dare to say it*, withdrawing ourselves from the protection of *Heaven*!

I plead the cause of these *miserable sinners*, with the same sincerity, as I implore mercy for my own offences.—Let us see how the case really stands. Of the eight male criminals, I have just mentioned, I do not remember to have seen *one*, who was not treated as a *felon*; for tho' their *hands* were *free*, their *legs* were in *fetters of iron*—They were *playing at beating of hemp*, for as to the *quantity* of the work done, it seemed to be a *farce*; nor did I conceive, that this was a matter of any importance, compared to the *evil* arising from being associated in so indiscreet and indiscriminate a manner. One of the offenders, as well as I remember, had been guilty of *petty larceny*; another, of striking his master. What *temptation* might have been thrown in the way of either, would have been a proper subject of enquiry upon examination. Let us suppose neither

prisoner conscious of any great crime, yet being thus degraded with shackles of iron, and thus associated, is it in the human heart to conceive but that they would reciprocally exculpate the offence of each other, and entertain themselves with details of the conduct of those who were the occasion of their disgrace? And is it not probable they would mutually meditate *revenge*? What an *edifying conference* this must have been to the other prisoners, in the same apartment. Let us add a *third*; suppose that he had debauched his master's maid, and to the mysteries of *anger* and *covetousness*, gave a detail of *lewdness*. Among the *eight*, there was probably *one* worse than any of the *three* I have mentioned. What *good* can possibly arise from this manner of *congregating prisoners*, but to fertilize the soil of iniquity, and produce so *monstrous* a growth, as will overshadow the land with terror?

Custom gives a sanction to very strange absurdities; but it cannot alter the nature of *good* and *evil*; it cannot change the first principles of natural and revealed religion. Tho' we may supinely submit to it; if there is an intelligent power which superintends the moral world, That which no principle of *reason* or *experience* can warrant, must ultimately prove destructive to society.—Of this we have incontestible evidence *every day* and *every night*! Our news-papers are full of accounts of robberies, examinations of robbers, and executions! Can it be conceived that the familiarity of the *custom of thieving* will not extend itself? Do the sufferings of those who are *hanged*, or the impunity of those who are *not* hanged, create the safer economy? Those who pass unpunished give reputation to the *art of plundering*. Must we plunge into the calamities of a *foreign* or *civil* war, to let out the bad blood our *impolicy* generates?—If we go on, shall we not become fearful of our own *domestics*, or our *children*, and yet more terrified at the faces of each other, when we meet in the streets or roads, even under a meridian sun? Is it that I am *timorous* in asking such questions? No: it is because I am *not* timorous, that I ask them. Our situation may justly create the terrors of violence, and plunge us into the worst kind of slavery. The fear of a great evil, is a greater evil than the actual suffering of a *lesser* evil: but we actually *suffer a great evil*. We must alter our mode of imprisonment, *cost what it may*, or we shall not recover the *moral ground* we have lost.

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We must now fight up hill; but if we contend in earnest, we shall conquer. I shall say more in its place in regard to the cure of our political internal maladies; what I now urge, is on the preventive side.

With regard to the females in Bridewell, they were associated together in one room, and as I understood, all lodged in another over it. These prisoners were then at dinner upon a comfortable mess of rice-milk, and tho' supposed to be of the profligate kind, their behaviour to me was unexceptionable. That they were not mistresses of such address as to keep themselves out of the hands of justice needed no proof.—Alas, my friend! what justice can be done in the present method of treating prisoners? If doing justice implies an attempt to reform an offender, and to restore her to the world, more fit to discharge the duties of life, or less dangerous to the community, than she was before, can it be said that justice is done in Bridewell?

The governors are liberal in their allowance to the prisoners, supposing their crimes do not call for severity: six-pence a day for food, warrants this suggestion: But what good is done beyond a short temporary removal of a pick-pocket, or a street-walker, a turbulent or refractory person, if they go out of the hands of the magistrate worse than they came into them?

The governors of Bridewell order their prisoners to Chapel on the Sabbath-day, and I suppose on some other days also; but is this adequate to their circumstances? If the reverend gentleman, of his own motion, should incline to talk to these prisoners with a zealous intention of reforming them, would he address them without distinction? In common life, twenty minutes conversation with the person who is particularly admonished, is of more efficacy, than ten times the labour of the pulpit, in the beaten track of sacerdotal duty. Such is the human heart, and we must take it as we find it. And what are refractory apprentices, or dissolute persons, perhaps devoted to Bacchus or Venus, to think of themselves, after being fetter'd like felons, and associated with people committed for thefts or violence? If there is a single person among them abandoned, beyond the power of mild correction, it is reasonable to presume such an
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one will infect the minds of the rest, and imperceptibly degrade them, perhaps below the measure of a recovery to a sense of moral rectitude.

The common prostitute, the turbulent woman, or the poor wretch whose drunkenness, or the *mercury* she has taken as a remedy, has brought into a temporary state of *insanity*; what is it possible any of these can *learn* of their companions, with respect to their duty to God or their neighbour? Is *reason* out of fashion? Is the history of *Christ* so little credited, that no man will plead for *mercy* upon any principle of *reason* or *religion*?

I have had frequent opportunities of knowing, that many wretched females who have been in this state, have in a great measure lost their sense of good and evil, in a much higher degree than others of the same level who have not been exposed to such *ignominy*. The idea of having been, as they term it, a *Bridewell-bird*, gives them the most disadvantageous impressions of themselves; and helps them to wear off the remains of that ingenuousness, from which repentance might be expected; and consequently they are rendered the more accomplished in *villainy*.

Let us indulge a *charitable hope*, that if they were lodged each in a separate apartment, they might be admonished for their *past* conduct; *counselled* for their *future* behaviour; assisted with *proper books*, and treated in all respects with humanity. If this were done, the most part of them would think seriously of their condition:—They would meditate *how* they might return to the world, and act upon *honest* principles;—they might be happily restored to useful life, without any tedious or expensive confinement. As they are now managed, what can they propose to themselves, but merely to live as they lived before?

There are but few tempers so perverse, but the arts of persuasion will work on them, especially in their *youth*. That there is much *perverse-ness* in the heart; that *some* tempers are *incorrigible*; cannot be doubted: but let us look *into ourselves*!—The spirit of man answers as the reflection of a mirror; and a gentle treatment, flowing from the law

of kindness, will make a different impression, from That which is received from so *cruel*, so unmeaning a conduct, as this which I am now complaining of. A nation of philosophers!—In what doth the philosophy of the governors of *Bridewell Hospital* consist? I have the honour to be known to several of them, whose private characters I revere: in their corporate capacity, with respect to this object!—my heart bleeds!

Let us hope for the best! In order to execute this plan with propriety, the *matron* of the house must not be a *vulgar* nor *illiterate* person: Piety and good sense, humanity and knowledge of the world, should conspire to qualify her for the office, and teach her, what one human being should be to another. Let *her* recollect, that change but names, and we are all in so much distress, as to need much aid!

The prisoners being *properly cleansed, cloathed, fed, and instructed*, might, in the most summary way imaginable, be so restored to the world, as to answer the great ends of *justice* and *mercy*; and, perhaps, in the issue, create a less charge than this *play of justice*, in which the culprit is brought on the stage half a score times, and makes a *miserable exit* at last, before she reaches the age of *twenty* years. Has this conduct the appearance of the *national equity* of a wise *Christian* people? Where is the mercy or good policy of it? “But would not this *kind of treatment* tempt some of these women to become *prisoners*, in order that they may get some *cloaths* upon their backs?” What! to *feed hard*; to suffer confinement, in *solitude*, for an uncertain time; to be disciplined in the school of virtue and religion, in which they were never admitted, or have long since forsaken? No, Sir: *Solitude* is too terrible to them to admit of such a suggestion! We cannot suppose they would pay more for their cloathing, than they *could* think them worth; nor would cloathing be necessary in every case: Such an imposition might be sometimes *meditated*; but a greater number who might really try this experiment, would be wrought upon by the force of *conviction*, than could support the severities of such a trial, for the sake of any such advantage.

“But will they not return to their evil course?”—Some of them, probably, will return. Is there any class of mankind who can be *all* held by

by the utmost powers of persuasion. They will not all "hear the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely!" It would be a Heaven indeed, if *all* the events of human life were to answer exactly to the intention; but if "by mercy and truth iniquity is purged," let us be merciful, and pursue a wise and consistent plan, and leave the event to Heaven!

It is obvious, that the use of *an apartment* for each prisoner will prove the only effectual means of calling forth *reflection*, and preventing *disgrace* and *infamy*. Such a situation only can furnish the means of *admonition*, where the attention cannot be called off, by any false shame, suggested by bad company, or dissipation of thought, which ever must invade such wretched beings. If the *governors of Bridewell*, leaving their long beaten track of delusion and misery, will do their duty to God and their country, and prepare for such solitary imprisonment, the *work will be done*, tho' it will require *time* and *constancy*. If *some* of the apartments are made for the reception of two persons, in case of sickness, that a servant of the Hospital may sleep in the same room, it may be well; but under *no pretence* should any two or more prisoners be associated.

The governors may be morally assured that such an oeconomy will interest the parents and friends of the offenders, and facilitate this good work. For these, seeing that *mercy* is shewn by the *magistrate* and *governor*, will be the more ready to forgive, and put the culprits in a way of getting their bread. This method will operate strongest in behalf of *females*: Let the father be assured his *daughter* is returned to a sense of her guilt, and a resolution of amendment, he will not resist the *importunities of nature*, nor the dictates of *grace*: The gushing tear of forgiveness will flow down his hoary cheeks, and he will receive her with paternal love.

"You mean then to make *Bridewell* a *Magdalen Hospital*?" No:—the objects of That charity come by choice, though perhaps compelled by the miseries of their situation: The *Bridewell* prisoners are taken as *evil doers*. *Those* are not mortified in the flesh, unless it be by the sobriety of their lives: *these* will have a *sparer diet*. *Those* are associated in *twenties* or *thirties*, in the wards, where they work and learn to repent of their sins: *these* are to be kept *single*, for the twofold purpose

of *chastisement* and *repentance*. In the *Magdalen*, there is no authority to *confine*; in *Bridewell Hospital* the magistrates and governors are possessed of that right.—I wish, indeed, the line were drawn with precision, what the magistrates may do, and what the governor; for between *magistrate* as such, and only simple governor, neither seems to have acted with that energy, as the pious founder intended, and as *our times* require at their hands.

The cells, or apartments intended, should not contain a *less* space each than twelve feet square; their beds to be made to turn up: the bigger the rooms can *consistently* be made, the better.

There should be sufficient light for the prisoner to read and work; and *abundant* ventilation for health.

As the culprits should be made completely clean, when they go in, they should be obliged to remain so, under the penalty of shortening their scanty allowance of food.

Basons, water, towels, and combs, should not be wanting.

Every floor in the several stair-cases should have a supply of water.

The most cleanly provision must be made for the relief of nature in every apartment.

They should learn, that cleanliness will be imputed to them as a virtue, and rewarded with mercy.

In the extremity of cold weather, they should not want an additional warm garment, and the communication of so much warmth, as will render their situation not devoid of *comfort*.

Their work should be such as they can gain bread by, when they get into the world. Give them a habit of *industry* in *useful* employment, as the most certain way to enable them to get their bread, and they will
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earn it. I take it for granted they will gladly work, when they are taught to consider, how their lives depend on it; and that they must now fill up the void, which solitude would otherwise render dreadful.

If they acquire a reputation for industry, piety and good behaviour, their confinement may be shortened at the will of the magistrate. This confinement, which I call an *intermediate space* between both worlds, may qualify them for either. The same rules will nearly hold for *both sexes*.

“ Will not this plan require so much space, as may invade the *chapel*, “ *ball, court-room*, and the *houses lately built* ?” We may easily compromise this matter: Let the governors build upon more space, if they have it; or towards the clouds, if they want room. If the Hospital has *saved no money*, the *pious* may come in aid of it; otherwise it must take more time to complete the work. If a great number cannot be accommodated, do the business effectually for a few: in a short time the terror may keep the cells *empty*. This will be the glory of the governors: As the prison rooms are now circumstanced, they will be ever occupied. With regard to numbers, it should be constantly remembered, that a magistrate who poisons prisoners, by the noxious effluvia of their own atmosphere, whatever the *pretence may be*, should be called to severe account, especially if he cannot make it appear, that he has *moved* the proper tribunal, and insisted on the necessity of *more prison-room*. To lose lives for want of such room, as I am convinced has been often done, is the *capital disgrace of our times*!

If the *principle* I am contending for, be *good*, let us not lose sight of the object, but grapple it to our hearts, unawed by any *difficulty*!--*Difficulty* is no word in the dictionary of humanity and political necessity. This is the preservation of subjects to the state—It is the essence of the guardianship of the laws---It is the defence of the lives and properties of the *innocent*---The *palladium* of liberty---The means of *eternal happiness* to our fellow-creatures---And, as a consequence of our good intentions, the *everlasting welfare of our own souls*! If there is any *higher* object,

object, it is comprehended in a plan for preventing the misery and *devastation of human nature*.

In my next, I shall tell you what aid may be given towards this work; and in my subsequent letters, how, upon the same principle, I propose to punish *malefactors*, who must otherwise be put to death, or banished. I am now considering *Bridewell*, as a plan of *prevention* of great crimes, by a *proper chastisement of little ones*.

The circumstances of offenders will certainly be most easily come at by the assiduity of a sensible clergyman, who knows the world, and applies himself diligently to the duties of his office, upon the plan proposed.---There is the greater necessity, for I am *assured* that *some* of the magistrates avoid, if possible, making any commitment to this prison, as *believing* they shall do more *harm* than *good*.

The plan proposed would regain the credit of the institution: it would enable a judicious clergyman to discriminate the nature of the offences of the prisoners, and the state of their minds; the degree of the encouragement, and the period of the confinement.

The happy execution of the proposal, may depend, in no small degree, on the choice of *proper* clergymen, these *challenging no right* of remaining in the office, whether they do the duties of it or not. I have often observed how dangerous compassion to an individual is, where the interest of a community is concerned. I presume several chaplains will be necessary to perform the daily labour of instruction and admonition in public, and in private; not to be rendered laborious by the length, but calculated to inspire the mind with a proper sense of guilt, and a resolution of reformation; that the work may be done *well*, and not in a *vague, formal, and unmeaning* manner. In cases of repugnance to the mercy proposed, so far as the authority of the magistrate extends to the punishment, it will depend, in a great measure, on the report of the *spiritual guide*.

For *Heaven's* sake let us encourage men of the strongest understandings, and most tender hearts, to succour such beings! We have a nu-

merous clergy, learned and pious, of whom many would be ready, *diligently* to attend this Hospital, provided they were properly paid for it: they should live on the spot, or very near it. If the task were not the most *delicate*, neither does the *christian philosopher* seek for glory on a *bed of down*! If the *comforts* of this world, in conjunction with the *hopes of reward* in the next, were presented to many a worthy and ingenious divine, there is no reason to doubt but that the business would be *properly executed*. Can it be imagined, if this were a *road to preferment*, that we should not reap a golden harvest from a labour, which would at once do honour to our magistrates, our policy, our humanity, and religion?

If the governors of *Bridewell* will take up this object, in the *serious* view, for which I am now contending, they will think as *seriously* of causing their prisoners to be taught the meaning of the *sacrament of our Lord's supper*; the indispensable obligation to which, the *common people* of this land, as I have told you, do not consider as an essential part of the *Christian* worship. Let the prisoners become repentant, they will soon learn what it means; and that there is nothing in it which should deter them from the performance of this duty, provided a *sincerity of intention* accompanies the act. This is an object of *high importance* to the conduct of their lives.

I have conversed with women, who after living in a profligate manner, were made sensible that we are *all commanded to commemorate the death of Christ*; and attentively to consider the reason *why* he died, as himself, and his followers have declared. Such women have comprehended that this sacrament, is *an outward and visible sign, of an inward and spiritual grace*. The first part is easily understood; and from the moment they felt themselves inclined to forsake their evil course of life, they have been thoroughly sensible of what is meant by *spiritual grace*. To withhold *any means* of their worshipping God, according to the religion of their country, is a grievance of the *first magnitude*!

The governors of *Bridewell* are supposed to be of the graver and more aged part of our fellow-subjects. Will they indulge their *faith*,
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and look forward to *their own reward*? What trophies may they not raise to their own immortal glory!

It is not the magnitude of *bells*; the portraits of *princes* and *magistrates*, though in the best preservation; nor greasy caps tossed high into the air; can give any proof that a magistrate discharges his duty to God or his country! It is the comfort of the indigent and laborious; the art of the *mechanic* and manufacturer; and the sobriety of their lives, which bless the land with peace and plenty: and the abuse of these blessings, is the curse which attends us.

The preservation of such persons, and *their* children, with regard to both worlds, is the object on which our happiness as a nation depends: and so long as we neglect these, we render *ourselves* the very *forlorn hope*, such objects may be now considered. To act a part devoid of sentiment and practise a *supercilious, puerile play of justice*, inefficacious to the great purposes of *police*, domestic comfort, and the tranquillity of *our fellow-citizens*, must, in the issue, doubly affect our own peace. It will wound our hearts with a consciousness of *neglect*! It will reflect *national dishonour*! It *can* have no happy end! Nor can *our end* be happy if we persist in it.

The subject is exceedingly interesting, and the evil obvious. The confining men or women, for a certain time, and then discharging them, with an *admonition to take care of their future behaviour*, has the *pompous* appearance and *outside* of magisterial authority, but inwardly it is mockery: it is taking pains to deceive the prisoner and themselves.

Misery there will be, in spite of all our efforts to prevent it; but we *establish* false rules of conduct, and add an accumulated weight to it! If the prisoners are so publicly degraded, unassisted by proper instruction, or any *temporal good*; what can happen, but that they will live and die equally a disgrace to their *country* and its government; to the *magistrates*, whose duty it is to take care of the *police*; to the *priesthood*, which should mourn in sack-cloth and ashes at such devastation of piety and moral rectitude; and to ourselves in general, if we prove our hearts to be so callous,

callous, as to go on in the beaten track, without making any sincere offering to God, our country, or mankind!

Let us open a new scene of salutary *police*, equally honourable to the nation in general, and to the corporation of *Bridewell* in particular. Let us seriously consider that those whose warmth of *temper*, *ignorance*, *drunkenness*, *prostitutions*, *petty thefts*, and such like offences, are considered as *reclaimable*, should be treated in such a manner as will most *probably* operate forcibly. If they suffer in the flesh, by abstinence and hard lodging, their *minds* may be recovered to a sense of *reputation*, as well as *religion*: and without this, still we may ask,—how is it possible they can live, but by the *same crimes* that brought them into punishment?

Chains and fetters of iron, and the disgrace of being detained in company reputed infamous, were there only one in a hundred an abandoned wretch, are means which will never answer the end.

If the plan proposed should require powers which the *charter* of incorporation, or bequests made, should not extend to, all good men will unite in lending assistance. The complexion of the times will render it easy. Necessity calls for it—and Providence invites, in a particular manner, with the most benignant aspect.

The *site* of *Bridewell* is advantageous: the building capable of being enlarged, and part of it may be *converted*. I do not mean to make war with the good officers who administer; but to cultivate a *perfect understanding* upon the solid basis of a mutual compact, between the *public*, the corporation, and the subjects whom *Edward VI.* certainly meant to relieve in the most effectual manner, according as *ages to come* might judge necessary. *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R IX.

THINGS may be so circumstanced, by the infernal incantation of party, vicious self-love, and sinister views, that a proposition self-evident, may be represented as visionary. It may be supported by the most cogent arguments, and the most stubborn facts; notwithstanding which it may be treated as a scheme imported from *Utopia*, and utterly impracticable, for no better reason, than that it hath never been tried; and requires *some virtue* to execute it. I am therefore prepared to see my proposal treated as visionary, by those who will not find it their interest to treat it in any other way; and perchance, by such as will not give themselves any trouble to examine it: but those who are sending for their smith, to plate their doors with iron, will surely wish that *Bridewell* should cease to be a *nursery for thieves and prostitutes*.

If a candid enquiry should open the eyes of any, to make it appear as practicable as it is expedient, I shall rejoice. If they can produce a better plan, I hope I shall have the grace to acknowledge it. I have expatiated on the force of the affections, supported by the auxiliary strength of the understanding: I have appealed to experience, for an alteration in the œconomy of *Bridewell-Hospital*, for both sexes: let the proposal be fairly examined. To suppose human nature, in the persons of *Bridewell* prisoners, sunk below recovery, would be as injurious to it, as to grant some of the objects to be reclaimable, without using any *proper means* for the purpose.

Facts are irresistible. Evil communication, in all ages, has corrupted men's manners. No company can be so bad for a *little thief*, as

as that of another *little thief*, except the society of a *great one*. *Bridewell*, like our other prisons, is known to be the instrument of corrupting manners. Such corruption of manners has cherished and let loose a multitude of thieves: we are sorely distressed: My proposition militates against this dangerous practice; and if for this reason it merits no candid examination, we must wait the issue.

In pursuing the several modes, by which the rising generation may be preserved, and prevented from falling a sacrifice, the *London-Workhouse* calls for the public attention, as a public necessary school of instruction and discipline. Were it properly supported, it might administer, in a higher degree, to the relief of the indigent, and nip the vices of the infant mind in the bud. The number of children in this place, does not, I believe, exceed *one hundred*. Their work consists chiefly in knitting *cauls* for wigs, and making *purses*. After they have been instructed for twelve months, their labour is *farmed* out to their instructor for a *shilling a week each child*, which contributes so much towards their maintenance.—This institution was formerly of the complex kind, particularly appropriated to the education of *innocent children*, and part to the correction of *vagabonds*. It derives its origin from an act of parliament of 1649. From that time it became important, by the number of distressed objects it received. In 1662 it was incorporated. The Lord Mayor for the time being was appointed the *president*: and it depended on private benefactions, with such allowance from the revenues of *London*, as the corporation of the city thought necessary; authority being given to purchase lands or tenements to the annual amount of *three hundred pounds*.

From 1701 to 1742, the infants, and the *children* received to be educated, amounted to - - - 3002

The number of vagabonds, pilferers, impostors, and dissolute persons, was no less than - - - 19414

Of these died in prison - - - 215

The rest, after being relieved, or punished by imprisonment, or other correction, were discharged, some to voluntary transportation, and the greater number restored to the useful offices of life.

This institution, at the commencement of its establishment, received *young children* from the parishes, these paying 50*l.* with each child. It is probable but few were sent, the loss of infants having long been a heavy complaint. Since 1751, this house hath received only such young persons as were found begging in the streets, vagabonds, and pilferers. About the beginning of the last war, the governors of this charity disposed of what they called *the keeper's side*, where the adults and dissolute persons had been usually imprisoned. As *misery* has kept pace with the influx of wealth; to judge from the event, it would have been more consistent to have enlarged the *Workhouse* for the purpose of receiving *vagrants* and *offenders*, with a view to their correction and instruction, to prevent the growth of iniquity: the contraction of the building has answered neither purpose.

Though vagrants usually fly to the western parts of these cities, the governors of this institution might probably collect nearly equal to the number received from 1701 to 1742; a proper attention to whom might in a few years do much good, or keep the house empty.

It was about the year 1760 when I first enquired how this institution was circumstanced. The information I then received was, "The Marine Society has done our business so completely, nothing remains for the London-Workhouse." This gave me much pleasure, as I had reason to believe it true, respecting boys turned of twelve years old; between five and six thousand such having been sent to sea during the late war: but it is no less apparent, that if, in time of peace, this society cannot with their utmost efforts, find *proper masters* for the accommodation of above 150 such boys fit for the sea, this beneficial work is not sufficient. If the magistrates of *London* are anxious to support the safety and happiness of the city, and prevent the misery which invades us, from the want of a *salutary police*; the *London Workhouse* is worthy their consideration, whether they ought not to restore it to its original state, by enlarging the buildings, and attending to its œconomy. If the primary object of a *good citizen*, is the preservation of the people, we are sure great numbers are by various accidents, *dropt here*, whose parochial settlements are uncertain; and many too dissolute to admit of being *passed home*.

Unhappily this *workhouse* is but the shell of a building, a shadow of the thing wanted; being only about twenty feet deep, confined by other buildings; and having no ventilation, cannot possibly be fit for any *great design*, nor commodious for a *little one*. I do not say it is worse ventilated than other places of the same kind, but no confined air is proper for the health, activity and hardiness, with which children ought to be brought up. It is very impolitic to immure young persons, as if the breath of their nostrils were to be measured by inches; or that they could possibly receive no injury by their own atmosphere. It is well known that a number congregated, not supplied with plenty of air, creates noxious stench. As the poor have not the liberty of living where they please, and are often ignorant how to preserve themselves, the common bounties of nature, *air* and *water*, ought to be allowed with a most liberal hand. It is astonishing how the use of these articles is neglected in common life, especially among the *indigent*, as if they disdained to accept them at the hand of God.

Whether the magistrates of *London* will enter seriously into this matter or not, let us turn westward, and see how it fares with our friends in *Westminster*: we may say, the ghost of sobriety and order walks unrevenged amongst us. But, as some are rapacious to a degree of violence to gratify their passions, others are no less retentive of their money, to maintain their way of living, in which *their* passions also have the greater share! Here we see the necessity of the intervention of government, and the energy of laws to restore things to their proper course, that we may glide through life in innocence and peace.

I have been for some years persuaded of the necessity of a well-regulated *public workhouse* in *Westminster*: her streets are crouded with objects, who employ such a variety of arts to baffle the vigilance of magistrates and parish-officers, as beggars all description. In spite of the act of *Queen Anne*, which requires the payment of five shillings for every penny given in the street, the real misery of some, and the fictitious distress of others, draw no inconsiderable support from

the pockets of the humane passenger, whose abilities do not extend beyond the pence which he bestows, on such objects as affect his heart. In vain shall we plead against such a violation of *genuine police*, till we have a proper place for the reception of the objects when they are apprehended. So many vagrants distress our eyes or ears, at every corner, *Westminster* may be called the grand assembly of *Britain's* misery, as well as the plume and mirror of her glory. The *passing* of vagrants to their respective parishes, is a fruitless, expensive work: it is a precarious temporary relief: to such as have enjoyed the sweets of beggary and idleness, in the streets of these cities, it by no means operates as a cure.

If a spacious and commodious general workhouse were built, the several distinctions of young and old, virtuous and vicious; those who would work if they could be employed; and those who will not work but by compulsion, might be provided for: this seems to be the only expedient to clear the streets, and prevent the numerous evils which grow from penury and idleness.

If the punishment of *vagrancy* were *twelve months imprisonment* in such a workhouse, we should not have so many people begging in our streets: and the additional work done by those whose *employment* it is now to *beg*, would soon repay the cost of such an edifice. It would stand as an object of terror to those who are really idle and profligate, whilst it contributed to succour numbers who are really objects of commiseration; and cannot live here, nor yet find their way home, if they have any, without some temporary relief. There are numbers of every sort, good, bad, and indifferent, who might, and others who do, avail themselves of the parochial bounty, under the denomination of *casual poor*; yet profess the *trade* and *mystery* of *begging*, to the disgrace of good citizens, the obstruction of good order, and the *nursery of felony*. If this matter were seriously considered, I am convinced it is an eligible plan; and that it may consistently be required by parliament to be executed: but I believe it never will be executed without the legislative interposition. Farewell.

LETTER

L E T T E R X.

TO find the way, by slow and cautious steps, how to reform the people and establish a *police*, from designs calculated for prevention in the lower degrees, we must advance to places of *confinement*, where malefactors of higher note in iniquity take up their residence; still directed by the *star of mercy*.

Of all the miseries attending human life, none can exceed the *false economy*, or semblance of *economy*, of making the remedy the disease. The communication of delinquents with each other, in our prisons, might be intended by our forefathers, during the greater simplicity of their lives, as adding to the horrors of a prison; and that one might be a terror to another: but whatever their meaning, or no meaning, might be, it now operates in a deadly manner against the criminal, and the subjects at large; for by this means, thieves form themselves into communities, and become more terrible to every member of civil society. We do not make war with men, but with the crimes of men; nor do we mean to extend our resentment against the souls of our fellow-creatures. The earth is wide, and the heavens high. But for the paltry consideration of the purchase of ground, and the cost of building, joined to the wretched saving, with respect to the quality of men, who act the under parts in prisons; it is amazing what devastation is created! *Compassion* and *humanity*, *reason* and *religion* lift up their voices to the heavens! They cry aloud for justice and mercy, with regard to the necessity of more space, more divisions and subdivisions, to save delinquents from themselves: and if they happen to be acquitted, and return into the world, to give every passenger the satisfaction, that he who actually was a thief, has learnt his duty to God, and is become an honest man.

To corroborate by propositions, I must beg your attention to several interesting facts, which are not commonly known to people who do not make such objects their study.—I am just returned from the *New Prison*

now rebuilding. The arch of the entrance and gate-way, is adorned with rustic terror, the ensigns of justice, and the chains of imprisonment. The rooms of the men's side, are the only ones yet built; these are near thirty feet square, and I believe very proper, if it can be said there is propriety in our *usual* manner of congregating malefactors. When I objected to the prison, and took the liberty to observe what I thought ought to be done, my *guide* very naturally observed, "Lord! Sir, That would require a great deal of space!" "Ay, my friend, and very competent space do I mean you should have; and till that happens, you are likely to have business enough, in your dreadful occupation!"

I have already mentioned, that I made a visit to several prisons in these cities, some years since. In viewing *Clerkenwell-Bridewell*, I had the pleasure to find the good sense and humanity of the *justices of that division*, had induced *them* to provide a room divided into *twelve apartments*, with a passage in the middle, and apertures in the wall, for light and air; six of them are cells for the refractory apprentices, and opposite to them are six dormitories, into which they are removed at night. These cells, as well as I remember, are 8 or 10 feet in length, and 6 or 7 in breadth. The divisions are made of thick boards, but intended to be rebuilt with brick. These apartments are intended to awaken the hearts and understandings of unruly apprentices, turbulent persons, and culprits guilty of petty crimes, to a due sense of the offences they have been guilty of; and preserve them from the poisoned breath of abandoned wretches, with whom they might otherwise have been associated; and by this means restored, in an humbled state, to God and their country. Blessed magistrates, whom Heaven inspired with such a godlike mercy! The event has fully justified their most sanguine hopes, one of them having lately assured me, that no person was ever committed to one of those *solitary* apartments, who, in a very few days, was not reformed to an amazing degree.

In other parts of the same prison, I found felons of various denominations; some of the first magnitude. Those not actually chained in their apartments, where they slept, associated in the common yard; and as far as appears to the occasional visitor, behave decently: in justice to the external part, I must say this prison-house is one of the best ordered

I ever saw with regard to cleanliness, and freedom from noxious smells; though there were near an hundred prisoners in it. You may easily imagine, that a gloom was spread over this melancholy scene, though by habit, and the indulgence of nature, many offenders soon forget their sorrows. But what sort of conversation could there be among such people? Boys, young men, and those more advanced in life; such as were less guilty, and great criminals, mixed together. Is this a proper means of reformation? Neither the confinement, the apprehensions of transportation, or the expectation of an ignominious death, could afford such a motley crew any solid means of instruction, to fit them for this world, or That, where they must stand before an unerring Judge. For all the religion amongst them, as I was informed, they were indebted to a clergyman, who, from motives of charity, made them a visit on the Sabbath-day. Since that time, clergymen have been appointed by government for our prisons.

Totbill-Fields Bridewell is another of our prisons, for offenders in these cities. In this I found about 40 men, and near 20 women.— Among the former were several *felons*, the sessions often receiving 5 or 6 from hence, who are capitally convicted. There are *five cells*, lately made for the confinement of *unruly apprentices*; they are built with brick, and therefore better contrived for the purpose, than those of *Clerkenwell*, and more airy, having an *area* before them. They are 7 or 8 feet deep, and 9 or 10 broad, the door-place in front making near half the breadth. The delinquents sleep in the same place, and hemp is provided for them to beat, and *oakbark* to pick. Nobody is suffered to come to them, except the person who brings them their food, and the parent or master: they are generally confined for the space of *seven days*, and some for a whole month; but I could not learn that any provision was made for their *instruction*, in the moral and religious duties, against which they had trespassed. At this place, I heard complaints of the sale of liquor at the *tap-house*, particularly on the *Sabbath-day*, when the prisoners were visited by their friends. This, if I recollect right, has been since rectified. The little villain, and the felon committed for capital offences, meet in the common yard. This indiscriminate mixture, is the rock upon which we run, as if we determined to be wreck'd! To place young persons, whose minds are susceptible

tible of every kind of impression, on a common level with the most notorious felons!—Good God! will not such youths, already prone to evil, drink deep at the fountains of iniquity?

Theft, of a greater or less object, whether it be committed by a boy of *twelve*, or a man of *thirty*, the capacity of distinguishing crimes, makes the only important difference. The probability of reformation must be in favour of the *youth*, who perhaps was never taught the eternal distinctions of good and evil. Perhaps he has been *instructed to steal*, and tempted to it by an artful suggestion to which the unhappiness of his situation exposed him! Every circumstance that is favourable to him, ought to be weighed in the scales of piety and humanity. But to entangle him the more by leaving him to learn an evil lesson against God, his own soul, and society! O shame! shame!

To give you an idea of the miserable impolicy of this method, I will mention one instance, which happened at the time I am speaking of. A boy, about *thirteen years of age*, was committed to this prison for picking a gentleman's pocket of a watch. His father came to visit him, and with tears streaming down to his hoary beard, he implored the Almighty to give his son a due sense of his offence, that the punishment of imprisonment might reform him. After recovering from the agony of his grief, he expostulated calmly with his child, who with tears of contrition acknowledged his guilt, and promised amendment: the conversation passed in the common yard. Upon this, a hardened villain, at whose instigation the poor boy had committed the crime, passed his ill-timed jests, endeavouring to make the boy ashamed of his penitential sorrow, by saying, "If you want *courage*, my boy, you will never make a man!" A boy may be easily led to imagine that there is virtue in *courage*, though it be employed in thieving, and defying the gallows. Upon this principle, many a youth has been prompted to hazard his neck, and what is more horrible, to *die at the gallows*, as if he had no faith in the terrors of a judgment to come!

This familiar communication in our prisons, opens a traffic, highly injurious to the malefactors themselves: shewing a decent regard to
their

their immediate relations and solicitors, that they be allowed ample freedom in their defence; the rest only serves to undo us! The separation proposed cannot affect the real justice due to them.

You have heard of criminals sitting in judgment on each other, and going through a *mock trial*, in which more arts and contrivances are learnt, than can be easily imagined.

What aggravates the crime of the common mode of proceeding, is the most abandoned *execrable perjuries*. If the quality of persons could be distinguished, and the oath taken of some, and not of others, *truth* would be oftener come at, than by our present practice. A great part of our immorality, may be ascribed to oaths being administered so often, and with so little solemnity.

In *England*, an officer stands up in court, with a book in his hand, and says to the witness who is to give his evidence, "The evidence you shall give for our sovereign Lord the King, shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; so help you God." And then the witness kisses the book. In *Scotland*, where primitive discipline is not so much refined away; when a witness is called in, the Judge stands up, and orders him to repeat the words of the oath in the following manner. Holding up his hand, he says, "I solemnly promise before the eternal God, who will judge all men at the last day, when every secret shall be disclosed; that I will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so far as my memory will assist me; and this I swear, as I shall answer to God." I leave you to judge which is the most solemn.

That the communication of felons, prepares the way for the grossest scenes of perjury, is as manifest, as that this crime is familiarized to us in a manner unparalleled under any other government, religion, or belief in a God! I question if the most savage people do not act with more consistency, in this particular! Unhappily it is become a part of our constitution: it supposes, that we all believe in the *christian religion*; and, above all things, fear to call God to witness to that which we know to be a lie. We depend on our religion for the security

of our lives and properties; at the same time we have the mortification to see how little of it remains among many of the lower classes of the people, who have not *honour* as a substitute.

A person, against whom the circumstantial evidence amounted to a *proof*, that he had carried his wife to *Hounslow-Heath*, and there murdered her, when called upon at the bar to make his defence, lamented, in the pretended anguish of his soul, the grossness of the imputation of having murdered the woman he loved with the greatest tenderness: adding, that he had a witness to prove he was at another place, at the time the fact was said to be committed. A woman, whose name he had mentioned, was accordingly called for. The wretchedness of *her* appearance seemed to prejudice the court against her; but she desired to be heard, and told her story in these terms. "My husband was a prisoner (*mentioning for debt, or some light offence*); and I used to carry him his dinner. The prisoner at the bar took an opportunity to call me aside, and addressed me in these words. You seem to be a good sort of person: Have you a mind to do an act of justice, and save an innocent man? I am unjustly accused of murdering my wife, and I have so many enemies, that notwithstanding my innocence, I believe it will go hard against me. I will give you *five guineas*, if you will swear I was in such a place (*mentioning the place*) at such a time: here are *three* of them, and you shall have the other *two* when I am acquitted." The woman then speaking in her own person said, "I thought if I did not take the money somebody else would, and I had no intention to forswear myself: I told him that my memory was bad, and unless he wrote down what he had to say, I should probably forget it; and accordingly he gave me this paper (*producing the same in court*), and here are the *three guineas* (which she held up in her hands), and which I deliver up. I am *poor*, very poor: indeed, but I will not take the price of innocent blood, or screen a murderer from justice!" The court, as you may easily imagine, was struck with astonishment, and rung with applause: They ordered the *three guineas* to be given to her, and also made a handsome collection for her. This story deserves an honourable record..

What dark scenes of iniquity have not been acted by means of perjury. The more rigorous punishment of this crime, would probably
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restore us to a sense of that rectitude, of which we at present stand in such great need.

In every view, it must be apparent to you, that *nothing* will tend more to preserve us, whether by *prevention* or *cure*, than imprisonment, in distinct apartments.

We are now building a prison, or *New Newgate*: It was presumed, that provision would be made, for the separation of prisoners, and the confinement of them in such a manner, as to answer all the good purposes of justice to the *individual*, and the *public*, and relieve the magistrate in discovering truth. The foundation allowed of a lofty superstructure; but I fear the committee charged with the building it, has not carried it to such a competent height, as to afford a sufficient number of apartments. If justice is more easily executed than it used to be, and mercy and repentance promoted, it will be happy. In every point of light we can view the subject of solitary imprisonment, as necessary to reformation, the mind is left in pain, when the vices which are the occasion of the present distress are not guarded against.

After taking this view, and considering these facts attentively; driven out of all our *entrenchments* as to the plea of a *visionary design*, let us revert to *Bridewell Hospital* as an essential part of the plan of prevention. It was the intention of *Edward VI.* who gave this Hospital to the City of *London*, that it should be employed for this purpose; and upon this ground the city may build her patriotism, with regard to the care of her richer citizens, by preventing the poorer sort from falling victims to those laws which are so often trampled on. Her magistrates constitute a body of governors, who might have great weight from their office, and number: and they are supposed to be the conservators of our *police*. Upon the principles of freedom, every governor, as he means to do justice to himself and his country, ought to examine and give his voice, and not leave the duty to a *few persons*. Recent experience has taught them what the consequences are of being supine. It is in behalf of governors, magistrates and citizens, and their children, from generation to generation, in whose service I employ

my pen. Let us proceed in the presumption, that they will be as resolved and determined in the execution, as they may be clear in their comprehension of the fitness of the thing.

In order then to make room for what is so urgently necessary, it may be proper to remove what is evidently unnecessary, and discontinue the *institution of the Arts-masters*.

If we look back to the *days of Edward VI.* and behold the *present state* of this nation! we shall find this young king stand upon the rock of renown, for his royal charity and munificence; and rather wonder to behold that so large a portion of his foundations, as *Christ Church* and *Bethlem*, and the Hospitals of *St. Bartholomew* and *St. Thomas*, remain equally worthy the attention of the present age; and to appearance they will be the same to succeeding generations!

The proper education of youth is as necessary now as it was in 1550. It is not wonderful in a *trading nation*, that citizens should occasionally leave their families in distress; nor that persons should become as *insane* at this period of time, as they were in days of yore: We live in the same climate, in the same plenty, and are addicted to the same violence of temper; and the more vicious we grow, the more insanity and sickness there will be.—As trade and labour have increased, the stronger reasons have arisen for providing for the sick and maimed, among the labouring part of mankind.

These charities, I say, stand on a *rock*, and are protected by That Being who is sometimes stiled the *Rock of Ages*.—But this does not require the filling *Bridewell* with a heterogeneous mixture of *Arts-masters*, or unnecessary weavers, who stand in the way of establishing a noble plan of *police*, for the prevention of great crimes, by the due correction of little ones. If the house was originally granted for the correction of the profligate, it was given to be used in the way that will best answer this purpose, which the entertainment of weavers never can do.

There is a time for all things, and when the assistance and energy of government, become necessary to support the harmony and good order of the parts which compose it, a *wise state* will avail itself of every resource, in the most prudent and oeconomic manner.

When I last wrote on the subject (a), I suggested to the governors of *Bridewell*, that this part of their object, the *Arts-masters*, was become totally unnecessary; and of no use to the public, beyond the employment of so many boys, who might be as well taught under masters in the common way of apprenticeship. Many of the first and most considerable among the magistrates of *London* with whom I conversed on the occasion were entirely of this opinion. Indeed they declared it to be a gross *absurdity*; and that it was high time the governors should ask for authority to change this part, as no ways agreeable to the spirit and meaning of the founder and benefactors, *the end being so fully and entirely accomplished*. The original design was a house of correction, that by labour and admonition the idle and refractory might be brought to a right sense of their duty, and by proper treatment, not only prevented from being foes to their country, disturbers of the public peace, and victims to her laws; but by correcting the heedless sallies of youth, the weaknesses of the heart, the errors of the understanding, and the misfortune of improper education, render them friends to God and their country, with all the advantages which religion and the benefits of society can purchase.

This is the meaning of the plan I proposed; which after much thought and close attention to *real life*, I suppose to be the best method that can be pursued. If a better can be proposed, so much the happier it will be.

It is now three or four sessions since the Parliament restrained the *Spital-fields Weavers* from taking above a certain number of apprentices: Surely this is a presumptive evidence, that the *Bridewell Boys*, as apprentices to weavers, cannot be an object to encourage by peculiar immunities, to the detriment of a salutary police so urgently necessary.

(a) March, 1772.

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I am well aware how easy it is for men to find out reasons for not doing that which is not agreeable to them, and that they will say, "How can we recede? We have received donations which amount to a large sum!" So much the better, if it is properly employed: if not, let us correct and restrain the misuse of charity. You say, "The money was given for the *arts-masters*, and therefore we *must* maintain this part of our institution."—The argument is plausible. But suppose, in the first establishment of our *silk manufactory*, five thousand pounds a year had been left for *setting-up shop-keepers, or mercers, to sell silks*, and five hundred men of ability were now to offer to set up such shops, and even to give a sum for the *good-will* of houses and shops, without any such eleemosynary encouragement; would you still say, "No: we must give these 5000*l.* annually to silk mercers!"—Let us suppose further, that certain pirates had landed and pillaged many farms in *Kent*, and murdered several of the inhabitants, and that it became necessary to maintain a garrison in certain castles on the coast, which required *this revenue*; would you not be glad to receive national authority for the better appropriation of the 5000*l.* for the preservation of the lives and properties of the inhabitants of the county? If you shewed any repugnance, I should imagine your wits failed you, or that you had some secret and unjustifiable reserves, of which due cognizance ought to be taken by those who are the guardians of the *common welfare*!

I take the case to be so far similar, that we cannot with the least propriety say, "Weavers want the encouragement given to the *arts-masters*:" but we want the establishment of a *well-regulated police*, which may be obtained by abolishing the *arts-masters*, and making the local establishment of *Bridewell Hospital*, and such portion of its revenue, as properly belong to the article of *police*, instrumental to the accomplishment of so great and good a work.

In discoursing with the late *Sir Richard Glynn*, then president of *Bridewell Hospital*, he informed me, that the abolishing of the *arts-masters* had been under consideration; but finding that bequests and donations created an impediment, the Hospital had not then thought it proper to proceed in this business. I told him that parlia-
ment

ment would certainly give the Hospital relief; and that if it meant to do a right thing, there was an indispensable obligation for such an application: that with respect to the difficulties, supposing the fifteen arts-masters had actually taken five apprentices each, and that eighty poor boys are provided for, the benefit to the community can only arise from the invention, as in the case of a patent given for a number of years; for, if the business is done as well, or better, without a peculiar encouragement, the giving it is romantic and absurd. That with regard to holding apprentices bound to serve on any particular spot, it did not seem to be consistent with the nature of apprenticeships; and it is pretty evident, that no young man can be rendered the more sober for being associated with a number, the contrary generally happens. Apprentices living in a detached domestic way, will become the better citizens; the congregating numbers creates dissipation. Till very lately, the *Bridewell-boys*, of whom many have reached the years of manhood, were the *terror*, not the *delight* of these cities: But granting them to be as sober as other lads, it is an absurd community. I have heard it said they are skilful in working a fire-engine: It is to be hoped *every parish* is now properly provided; and the firemen of the assurance-offices, so deeply interested in extinguishing fires, make no dependance on a number of lads who ought to be taking their rest, or working at their looms. With respect to their peculiar dress, this part of reverence to our forefathers is preserved by the children of *Christ-church hospital*, and it serves well enough for boys under fourteen: But even these, when they are put out apprentices, appear in the proper garb of the present generation, and not in the improper dress, like men for labour, as the *Bridewell-boys* are clothed. *Elizabeth* was sovereign in the infancy of the loom: *George III.* sees it grown to maturity: Shall we still consider this as an infant art? If our fellow-citizens have no reason to be advocates for the *arts-masters*, but are in great want of a *salutary police*, it is natural to suppose they wish for such a regulation, as may keep their children in awe not to offend, or offending to be properly chastised. Their duty as christians, parents, and citizens, calls on them to implore such a mercy. There never was a time in which this change could come more in aid of the police of the city. You would think so, if you knew half as well as I do, the evil propensities of

of the rising generation; and the number of boys who are at this time training up in mischief, and learning how to die at the gallows.

With regard to the *arts-masters* themselves; the governors can be at no loss to fulfil their engagements with them, by giving them an equivalent for their house-rents, parish-rates, and freedom from city-offices, during the remainder of the time of their present apprentices: The last part is but a small favour to ask of the corporation of *London*, as it will be only for these particular men, for a short period of time. I know it is wished by some of the best friends of the public, and of the City of *London*, of whom many speak of the *arts-masters* with scorn and indignation, as a puerility, unworthy of a corporation built on so noble a foundation. They are astonished, that the governors of *Bridewell* should be guided by their passions or prejudices; and under the pretence of paying homage to an ancient institution, spend their money, which is so much wanted for the noblest purposes, in so wanton and unnecessary a manner, as actually defeats the intentions of the royal founder.

Farewell.

LETTER

L E T T E R XI.

SALUS *populorum*, is an epithet sometimes given to princes; the *health of the people* being a term synonymous with their general preservation, of which the king, as the father and first magistrate, is understood to be the chief instrument. Notwithstanding the blessings of *inoculation*, the high state of medical knowledge and surgery, and the conveniences which our improvements furnish, a great number of people die of the small-pox. According to the bills of mortality it is 1800 to 2400, the medium on *three* years being 2100: on *ten* years, 2500. The ordinary computations of deaths by the small-pox, in the natural way, is not above 1 in 7. If we call the mortality 2100, then 14,700 people may be supposed to have the *natural* small-pox (*a*). Before inoculation came in use, the number of deaths seldom exceeded 2600, which 7 times told is 18,200. Supposing exact care taken to inoculate *every person*, and 10 in 1000 (*b*) were to die of *inoculation*, the number would then be 182, instead of 2100.

The truth is, that many people are too negligent, and delay the inoculation of infants: some are superstitious, and offer up the lives of infants at the altar of *ignorance*. The danger to the inoculated person, being inconsiderable, it is frequently the cause that the private person and practitioner, disseminate the disease. They act with a *carelessness* that is incredible. I know of no man so wicked as intentionally to propagate this distemper: yet if *practitioners* are *interested* in its being propagated, they will not be the first to move for a reformation in this great article of *police*: and therefore it is highly necessary it should become an object of parliamentary consideration.

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(*a*) Allowing for a small portion to *die by inoculation*, the number who have this disease in the *natural* way, I compute to be 20 in 1000, out of which 1000, 145 die.

(*b*) By the account of the Inoculating-Hospital some years since, not above 5 in 1000 died.

I have talked with some surgeons, intreating them to recommend to the legislature a mode of preventing the *bad effects* of inoculation. It is an object of legislative cognizance; but as not one of them has yet had charity equal to this task, I determine to make one more effort, in the way of writing and soliciting the public attention. It is a debt due to humanity, that this object should no longer pass unnoticed; as that the reputation of *inoculation*, to preserve the lives of many hundred persons, should be guarded. For, granting that in this multifarious resort, many will squander away their lives, yet if due precautions were taken, so many would not fall. What can be so interesting as the lives of the people? The *small-pox*, not being of the *confluent sort*, and treated in the judicious manner now in practice, is a harmless disease.

There are some general rules, which occur to my mind, the due observance of which, might tend to the preservation of numbers in the *little empire* of these cities.

1. No pauper should be admitted into a workhouse, without a certificate from a justice of the peace, declaring when and where he or she had the small-pox, viz. by the report of their parents on this subject, or the parties giving other reasons for their having had it, or of having been inoculated without effect.

2. All masters and mistresses taking a menial servant, or apprentice, without the same kind of certificate, should be subject to a fine, one part to be paid to the informer, the other to the parish.

3. Proper houses, detached from communication with other houses, should be built for the small-pox; some being appropriated to inoculation only, and others to the natural way.—*The execution of this part may be rendered practicable by being profitable.*

4. Medical persons attending the small-pox, should have changes of garments, peculiarly devoted to this business, besides using other necessary purifications.

5. In several great cities of *Europe*, the small-pox is considered as a *plague*, inoculated persons performing a *quarantine*. In proportion to their numbers of inhabitants, much fewer people die of the small-pox, than with us. Do you not perceive, this is an object highly worthy of your enquiry?

6. As every nurse is now become a mistress of inoculation, there is no reason to send peasants to town, to take the advantage of our public hospital: Let this be devoted to foreigners and the natives of these cities.

7. The hospital at Pancras, is admirably situated for air: it only requires, that the area before it be inclosed with a wall. Some additional rooms may be necessary. It seems absurd to use this detached airy hospital, only as a preparatory for the disease, and then convey the patients into the town, when the disease begins to appear. Would there not be more common-sense, in keeping them for a certain number of days at the Inoculating-Hospital in Cold-bath-Fields, and then remove them to Pancras, to give the patients so much the more air, and deliver the town from the danger of the infection?

8. To do our business with propriety, these vast cities require a third public hospital, for the natural way of the small-pox. This should have no connection with That for inoculated patients. Such hospital should be very spacious and airy, and detached from all other buildings. Our misfortune is, that altho' we have been successful in inoculation, in the natural way, a much greater portion in the hospital die, than is common in this disease. This is supposed to be owing to the quality of the patients: but as the virulence of every disease increases in proportion to the number of patients congregated, more space is necessary. *This also is an object of your very serious consideration.* Numbers of people might be preserved, if proper authority were exercised in regulating this matter, taking due care, in all cases, that such ventilation be provided, as recent experience teaches to be necessary particularly in the treatment of this disease.

9. The notion that we are such adepts in inoculation, as to make all public efforts unnecessary, is a very false and dangerous conceit; for so long as such numbers die in London and Westminster of the small-pox, the evil demands a regulation, in the strongest terms! If Government were to take particular cognizance of it, whether respecting public hospitals, or any other house for inoculating, now conducted by private persons, it might be happy. I do not mean that any public money should be disbursed, because I apprehend, if the noble president, vice-presidents, and governors of the Inoculating-Hospital, with such auxiliaries as may be found, take up the object, in the zealous manner they have hitherto

acted, the part which relates to them may be accomplished without difficulty. The necessity of it will appear from the general bills of mortality, as well as the hospital account of deaths. The restraint of *private practitioners*, and the common course of private life, certainly require mature consideration.

We are further to recollect, that a cold indifference, where *life* is so immediately concerned, is a proof of great corruption of manners; it is such a departure from our national character for humanity; and so inconsistent with sound policy, as hardly to be paralleled in any well-regulated state. This article falls likewise under the head of *national strength*, in a more striking view, than many other regulations of *police*: but all weighed and examined national strength and police can never be separated. I apprehend that keeping a register of the numbers who have the small-pox during the year; distinguishing the natural way, and by inoculation, and the deaths in both ways respectively, will open the eyes of those who are ignorant or perverse. In any case, I beg you will turn this subject in your thoughts, as well to encourage people to be inoculated, as to prevent infection during the progress. *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R XII.

THAT so inconsiderable a body of people as *chimney-sweepers*, should be left entirely to their own discretion, is in one view not wonderful: but if it appears there is not a more manifest violation of the duties of morality and religion, of civil and religious rights, than in our conduct with respect to the children who are put or taken under the care of such persons, the *evil* calls for a remedy. If *police* means good regulations for the æconomy and preservation of the people, who are all entitled to one common freedom, so long as they act properly in their several stations, the neglect of these children is a reproach to us with respect to our humanity, and the exercise of the divine precepts of our religion. Should the master chimney-sweepers, and the journeymen of master chimney-sweepers, be suffered to take what number of apprentices they think proper?

I have taken some pains to investigate this object; and it appears, that many such *masters* and *journeymen*, who take apprentices, shew little or no regard to the duties of *masters*, in providing for them the common necessaries of life. Food is often wanted, and raiment not furnished beyond the trappings of misery, in which the boys work. Some indeed are washed every week, some every fortnight, but some hardly once in a year. As to instruction, or the worship of God, numbers of these poor children are left, as if they were not entitled to the common rights of society. Thus if they do not prey on their own species, it is because they are in so abject a state, as to lose the very power of doing mischief. I have heard some sober men of the trade confess, many of their fraternity are more dissolute than our common seamen, and spend their money with less discretion. Are such persons fit to be trusted with apprentices and the lives of subjects, *so much beyond the limits of any*
the

the most reputable trade, as commonly practised? Is any one to be indulged in taking so many as thirty apprentices, from *five to fifteen* years old? Some of these masters are not distinguished for probity; but we are not to condemn the fraternity on this account; tho' it is a presumptive evidence, they are not the class of mankind, in whom so lavish a confidence ought to be placed. I am acquainted with two or three master chimney-sweepers who are worthy and pious men: Were such persons whose veracity can be depended on, examined upon this subject, it would open a scene worthy the humanity of the *British* legislature.

I have the pleasure of being associated with several gentlemen (a), who endeavoured some time since to investigate this object, and try what could be done by the force of shame and persuasion. A letter was accordingly written to master chimney-sweepers (b), intreat-

John's Coffee-House, near the Royal-Exchange,
January 20, 1774.

(a) The COMMITTEE in Behalf of Chimney-Sweepers young Apprentices:

JOHN THORNTON, Esq;
JONAS HANWAY, Esq;
The Rev. Mr. BURROWS,
JOHN BLACKBURN, Esq;
JACOB GONSALES, Esq;
EDMUND BOEHM, Esq;
JOHN ANTHONY RUCKER, Esq;

GEORGE PATERSON, Esq;
THOMAS WALKER, Esq;
The Rev. Dr. KAYE,
JOHN DORRIEN, Esq;
JOHN LEVY, Esq;
Mr. A. WINTERBOTTOM.

This committee having lately sent the following letters, to such master chimney-sweepers, whose habitations they have been able to find out; think proper to make this publication, in order that they, as well as the world in general, may see the effects of this effort of humanity, in behalf of such apprentices to chimney-sweepers, as have not common justice done them.

(b) *The Letter sent in June 1773, to the respective chimney-sweepers, or as many of them as their habitations could be found.*

S I R,

I Am ordered to ask the favour of you to let me know, if you have any objections to the form of the indenture which I send you inclosed*. You see for what good and wholesome ends it is designed, as well for your interest, as that of the poor boys whom you may employ

* With this letter a printed form of an indenture was sent, and the number of boys mentioned in the account annexed have been placed out apprentice on the common legal conditions.

ing them to act like *Christians*. I cannot say it produced no good effect, for some few of the boys whom I have occasionally met, have informed

employ in your business. Be assured, that the better they are treated, according to reason, the more able and willing they will be to serve you: and if you teach them the love and fear of God, the great Lord of all, they will love and fear you, their master: and the more you secure their fidelity, the more respectable will you, and your trade, become; and your work per chance will be so much the better paid for.

When you think seriously of this matter, you will discover, that your own welfare depends on your *humanity*: and towards whom, *my friend*, can this be exercised, if not to those who depend on you for their bread, and the comforts of life? In this view, the happiness and misery of the life to come, are set in the strongest light before *your eyes*.

I write to *you*, in the same terms as to others of your trade; it being hardly possible for us to be acquainted with the character or conduct, of every particular *master chimney-sweeper*, in these vast cities: at the same time we are not ignorant, that there are some masters, in your trade, who possess the charity of a *christian*, and the feelings of a *man*; and would rather die, than treat their servants or apprentices cruelly, with respect to the care of their bodies or their souls.

Some masters provide proper rooms and beds, regular and sufficient food, and such clothes as the poor child can appear in, to worship God on the Sabbath-day. Others think of no such thing.

It is also to be presumed, that there are some who treat their apprentices with a kindness suited to their tender age. Perhaps you have children of your own: it cannot be many years since you was a child: for Heaven's-sake consider what you owe to God, and your country, under circumstances so interesting to religion and humanity. The poorest is as precious in the sight of Him who is our common Father, as the richest of mankind. And you must be sensible that the want of *instruction*, in a christian country, puts a poor boy in a worse state than if he had been born a heathen.

If any chimney-sweeper, so undervalues the trade, as to make a traffic in human creatures; if he takes a greater number of apprentices, than he can employ, in his own proper business; or leaves them in the summer season to take care of themselves; every man of candour, will be of opinion that such persons should be restrained by *law*: why should he not restrain himself by *reason*, and make this the law and rule of his practice? If he is doing that which *hurts the trade*, he is an enemy to it. There are many things in the world represented worse than they really are; but you cannot deny that the chief part of the boys, in your trade, are really treated very *cruelly*.

Nothing is so pleasant to the nature of man, as *humanity*: let it be fashionable, and your trade will become an object of regard, as a necessary, useful, and well-conducted employment, for the good of society. Soot no more defiles a man, than wheat flour.

If

formed me, that since the *act of parliament* (meaning the letter sent to their masters), their treatment had been altered much for the better; but

If you, *my good friend*, think this letter deserves an answer, you will give one. Our intention, in this enquiry, is equally good to all: we are *your friends*, as well as friends to your apprentices. We have no interest in view; and if you give us your thoughts upon the inclosed form of an indenture, you may depend that all due regard shall be shewn to your opinion; that this business may be conducted hereafter, in the best manner, for your own interest. Things cannot go on as they have done. Why should *your trade*, above all others, be a monument of shame, and disgrace to us, as a civilized christian nation?

I am, with all due regard,

JOHN'S COFFEE-HOUSE,

near the Royal-Exchange.

By order of the Committee,

S I R,

Your most obedient servant,

Clerk.

P. S. I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that a beginning has been made in placing out apprentices to your trade.

Another General Letter, sent in December 1773.

S I R,

NOTWITHSTANDING the strong application made to master chimney-sweepers, the number of boys placed out apprentice by the regular indenture proposed by our committee, doth not yet exceed *fifteen*. And we are sorry to observe the streets of these cities yet swarm with deplorable objects: many poor children, of a very tender age, unwashed, in sooty garments, not half covering their limbs in the coldest weather, present themselves to every passenger, even on the *Sabbath-Day*.

We are at the same time to do justice, by acquainting you, that we are informed by our emissaries, that the poor boys of some few masters in your trade, are much better clothed and fed, than they were before. Being determined not to give up the cause of pity and compassion, we again appeal to your candour and humanity.

With regard to your taking three or four times the number of apprentices you can possibly employ regularly; letting them out for hire in the *winter*; without taking care to provide the necessaries of life for them; it is a most unwarrantable practice. The consequence of it is, that you leave them to subsist by downright beggary in the *summer season*, which is no less shameful in a civilized country.

Thus it happens that you expose these wretched children, of whom many are *orphans*, to every temptation; and lay the foundation of their becoming the vilest, and most abandoned of mankind.

These

but this has extended but to a small number, and to these, I am afraid, only for the time. The distresses of these poor children will not be removed,

These are considerations of a serious nature, and demand a public regulation. If such evils cannot be remedied by an association of your trade, we are to inform you, that it is intended to appeal to parliament, in hopes of restraining master chimney-sweepers from taking above a certain number of apprentices, as those of the weavers, agreeable to the regulation established by the authority of the legislature. This seems to be absolutely necessary in defence of humanity, religion, and good order. We appeal to your hearts, as free subjects, whether the meanest of us, born in this land of liberty, ought to languish in want of necessary food and raiment; or be deprived of such christian instruction, as the religion of our country requires? If the supreme magistrate cannot enslave a subject, how much less ought you to have the privilege of degrading human nature, by plunging your fellow-creatures into such a depth of misery? I am, with all due regard,

JOHN'S COFFEE-HOUSE,
near the Royal-Exchange.

Clerk.

GENERAL ACCOUNT OF RECEIPTS and DISBURSEMENTS of the COMMITTEE
to January, 1775.

R E C E I P T S.			
<i>Jonas Hanway, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>Lord Fortescue</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>Andrew Thompson, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>Capt. Affleck</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>John Blackburn, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>The Rev. Mr. Affleck</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>Jacob Gonsales, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>Mrs. E. Affleck</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>John Thornton, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>Philip Affleck, Esq;</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>Sir George Pococke, K. B.</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>Capt. Digby</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>Charles Pelham, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>Dr. Heberdine</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>Edmund Boehm, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>The Rev. Mr. John Parkhurst, of</i>
<i>John Anthony Rucker, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>Epsom, out of money left at his</i>
<i>Robert Lord Romney</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>disposal</i> — — 5 : 5 : 0
<i>Deborah</i> — —	3 : 3 : 0		<i>John Dorrien, Esq;</i> — — 2 : 2 : 0
<i>Thomas Walker, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>A Lady by Mr. Wegg</i> 2 : 2 : 0
<i>The Rev. Mr. Burrows, being</i>	26 : 5 : 0		<i>A Lady by Mr. Hanway</i> 10 : 6
<i>part of the money collected at</i>			<i>Ditto by ditto</i> — — 10 : 6
<i>Berkeley Chapel, and other</i>			<i>Ditto by ditto</i> — — 5 : 0
<i>Contributions,</i>	—	46 : 14 : 8	<i>The Rev. Dr. Kaye</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>Lady Colebrooke</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>John Levy, Esq;</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>Mrs. Wray</i> — —	10 : 6		<i>Leonard Hammond, Esq;</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>John Hankey, Esq;</i>	—	1 : 1 : 0	<i>Lady Clayton</i> — — 2 : 2 : 0
<i>A Lady</i> — —	1 : 1 : 0		<i>Miss Clayton</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>J. T.</i> — —	1 : 1 : 0		<i>Mrs. Hendley</i> — — 2 : 2 : 0
<i>John Evelyn, Esq;</i>	—	1 : 1 : 0	<i>Robert Nettleton, Esq;</i> — — 5 : 5 : 0
<i>A Lady by Mr. Hanway</i>	5 : 5 : 0		<i>— Mangles, Esq;</i> — — 1 : 1 : 0
<i>John Julius Angerstein, Esq;</i>	—	1 : 1 : 0	<i>J. L.</i> — — 2 : 2 : 0
<i>Freeman Flower, Esq;</i>	—	2 : 2 : 0	<i>A Lady 10s. 6d.—C. D. 10s. 6d.</i> 1 : 1 : 0
<i>Mr. and Mrs. Grey</i>	—	1 : 1 : 0	
			£. 125 : 3 : 8

moved, without the exertion of coercive power. Misery they must suffer, from the nature of their occupation; but why it should be aggravated, beyond any thing practised perhaps in any country, is hard to reconcile with that humanity for which this country has been long celebrated.

These distressed boys are often bought of worthless parents; or picked up as a forlorn hope, and sold by one chimney-sweeper to another for ten

DISBURSEMENTS.

Cloathings for 19 complete suits, consisting of coat, waistcoat, breeches, shirt, shoes, stockings, &c. at 23s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d, being on the first subscription of 26l. 5s.	22 : 11 : 0
Contingent charges—Pamphlets, paid for printing 1000 <i>State of Chimney-sweepers young Apprentices</i> , and paper for ditto, 12mo. sold by <i>Brotherton</i> in <i>Cornhill</i>	8 : 12 : 0
One thousand abstracts of ditto on a sheet of fool's-cap, for distributing among the trade, and to solicit subscriptions	3 : 3 : 0
500 Letters to the master chimney-sweepers, explaining the nature of the design of the committee	2 : 10 : 0
Publications of ditto, in the <i>Gazetteer</i> and <i>Public Ledger</i>	2 : 16 : 6
Printing 18 pair of indentures, and 36 pieces of parchment	1 : 7 : 0
Stamps to indentures, 18 pair at 5s.	4 : 10 : 0
<i>George Richardson</i> , stationer, for indenturing out sixteen boys as per agreement with the committee, at 2s. 6d. to <i>December</i> , 1773.	2 : 0 : 0
For the use of a room, for the meetings of the committee	1 : 10 : 0
Given sundry poor boys, chimney-sweepers, at different times	3 : 3 : 0
Porter for distributing the pamphlets and letters, &c.	15 : 0
Books, paper, and sundry petty expences	1 : 14 : 4
37 pair of stamps to indentures—In 1774, at 5s.	9 : 5 : 0
<i>George Richardson</i> , stationer, for attendance and executing indentures of 39 boys more placed out from <i>December</i> 1773, to <i>December</i> , 1774.	4 : 17 : 6
Carriage of letters, &c.	10 : 0
Printing and parchment for 39 indentures and sundry charges	1 : 10 : 0
Clerk for attendance, writing out the fair register, enquiries, and other business relating to this design	2 : 2 : 0
Publications of the General Account, and given to boys, &c.	3 : 16 : 11
	76 : 13 : 3
In the hands of <i>J. Hanway</i> , Esq;	£. 48 : 10 : 5

SUBSCRIPTIONS for the salutary design of reforming this abuse, are received by Messrs. Drummonds, Charing-Cross; Croft and Co. Pall-Mall; Hoages and Co. Fleet-street; Sir Charles Asgill and Co. Lombard-Street. Also, by John Thornton, Esq; Church-Alley, Lothbury; the Rev. Mr. Burrows, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury; Jonas Hanway, Esq; Red-Lion-Square, Holborn.

ten or twenty shillings. Some masters take a dozen, some twenty apprentices. One of them had the *modesty* to take as far as thirty, many of whose faces he really did not know. In these cases, it is common to let them out at six-pence per day; the boy to get food *where he can find it*: the charity which their misery excites in the streets, if it exceeds a penny, they are again plundered of it by the master.

Our police, is in no instance so horribly neglected as in this. There is an obvious remedy which probably will operate powerfully. If you will restrain the number of apprentices, and inflict some *pecuniary* punishment on those who shall take above a certain number, suppose *five apprentices*, you may by degrees restore these subjects to their rights. The same reasons which induced the parliament to prevent disorders in *Spital-fields*, by restraining the Weavers in the number of their apprentices, holds in ten times stronger a degree in regard to these children.

A *master chimney-sweeper*, who seems to have a competent share of good sense, and the fear of God before his eyes, assures me, that any one of the fraternity, may provide for a family, with a journeyman and *three* apprentices; informing me at the same time, that *he* washes, feeds, cloathes, and instructs his boys, in a manner he defies any person to object to: and that they attend the public worship on the Sabbath-day with a just regard to their duty as Christians.

If a regular oeconomy were introduced amongst them, being only such as common decency requires, there might probably be a smaller number of *sweepers for the foot only*, and something more would be thrown into the scale of *the trade*, but the national humanity and policy would be preserved; we should not be idle spectators of such a gross violation of the most sacred regards, respecting these poor children.

The occupation is *necessary*; and no mode of sweeping is in all respects so convenient to us as that in use: a great part of the work must be done by *children*, and it is attended with such hazards and difficulties, that instead of the worst treatment which can be given to human creatures, it entitles them to a peculiar commiseration.

Every one of us has long beheld the calamity : a few have thrown in a mite to prevent it : to make a regular and effectual effort, more strength is wanting. To complain, will be to very little purpose, if we go no further. For my own part, as a *subject*, as a *man*, and as a *christian*, I feel myself criminal for my share of the neglect. For what is humanity given us? Can we boast of the blessings of liberty bestowed by the hand of God, if any fellow-subject, being poor and left as a *stray* on the wide world, may be treated with a cruelty beyond *Egyptian* bondage, or slavery in *Morocco*? Let us be consistent in these grand articles, and not forsake our country, nor our religion. These poor children can no more plead their own cause, than infants at the breast. Their *miseries* are known to every passenger in the street : they are *fellow-citizens*, *fellow-creatures*, and *fellow-christians* ; but we do not act towards them, as if they could challenge relationship in any one of these instances.

We acknowledge the *civil* and *religious* rights of every subject to be equal : and without refining on government, *to the loss of our wits*, we desire to see justice done to every one, and to preserve those who need our aid : how then shall we answer for this neglect to *God* or our *country*? When you ruminare on such subjects, think of this. It will give proof of one of the best things, necessary at this time : It will give a proof that *energy in government* is not unknown amongst us. If we begin at the lowest round of the ladder, we may mount to the top : We cannot reach it by any other possible means. The notion that our liberty will not admit of a *police*, is in effect saying, That *liberty* is productive of misery of every kind, and that it must terminate in anarchy and the dissolution of government. On the contrary, it is as demonstrable, that a great people cannot live *without police*, as that they cannot survive long on a plan of corruption. Farewell.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R XIII.

THE foundation of true *police*, is the *employment* of the people.

The proper management of the poorer part of them, is the first lesson in the school of *moral* and *political* oeconomy. The wealthy will be their own masters; but happily for mankind, *necessity* often accomplishes that work, which baffles the utmost stretch of mere human sagacity.

I sat off in my correspondence with you, by observing, that we spend in *England*, *sixty millions*: I supposed only a *fortieth* part of this sum, viz. 1,500,000, devoted to the maintenance and support of the parochial poor. So humane an establishment is hardly to be found in any country on the face of the earth: but *practice* with *theory* does not always correspond.

In a computation of so complex a nature, as the 60 millions, we must proceed by comparative views, and the analogy of things. The account supposes a shilling in the pound land-tax, to produce half a million, and consequently the whole *ordinary* rent of 20s. to be *ten* millions: That the lands really produce, on a medium, *four* rents, and consequently the annual income of this article alone is — 40,000,000 I give to the rent of houses, according to ordinary computation, a tenth part of the computed expence of 60 millions, and this amounts to — — — 6,000,000 The produce of manufactory and commerce, navigation, mines, labour and mechanic arts, considered as distinct from the mere produce of the earth, if I were to distinguish each, would require a deeper investigation than is necessary on the occasion; I suppose it to be — 14,000,000

£ 60,000,000

This

This is analogous to the reputed number of six millions five hundred thousand inhabitants in *England*, at 9l. 5s. each, which is near 6d. a day. If there are more people than 6,500,000, it reduces the price of each. If one man's person, creates a charge of ten pounds, in the mere gratification of his vanity, appetites, and passions; many others live upon 2, or 3 pence a day, cloathing included. *Paupers* in *London* cost about 5d. The fortieth part of the national expence for the poor's-rates, is therefore no proof that a fortieth part of the people are *paupers*, since it is evident, that in many parts of these kingdoms, the indigent and laborious poor, live harder, and at a much less charge, than supports the *paupers*.

If we have 650,000 inhabitants in these cities, *i. e.* a tenth part of the whole number of people, the fortieth part of these is but 16250; but many more are actually relieved, in a greater or less degree, by the parochial tax. The infants and children, *paupers*, by the abstracts of the registers, made by the company of parish clerks for 1773, were 6885 (a), under the direction of parish officers.

These vast cities have above their due proportion of *paupers*. We are to compute of *adults*, near twice the number of the children under 14 years old, so that we may call them full 13,000; and of *out-pensioners* near two-thirds of the *inn-pensioners*, so that we may call them 8000 more; consequently the whole number is near 28,000: we have more in *London* than belongs to it, both by emigrations and accidents.

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(a) Of these, were transferred from the year 1772	—	—	3515
Received into the Work-house, or Parish-house, in 1773	—	—	3370
Their ages were, above 4 years old, not exceeding 14 years	—	—	4633
Under 4 years old	—	—	2252
Of this whole number, were foundlings, or children found in the streets	—	—	104
Illegitimate	—	—	797
Casual poor infants	—	—	255
The number placed out apprentice in 1773, was	—	—	425
Infants that died in the country, where they were out at nurse	—	—	116
Remained in the country at nurse	—	—	1226

This is analogous to the reported number of six millions five hundred thousand inhabitants in England, at 12s. each, which is 168,000. The foundlings, illegitimate, and casual poor infants, are 1156 on 6885.—28,000 paupers of all kinds, at £6, is £168,000: this is levied on houses. The rents are high; and if we suppose them to be near £1,200,000, it will require above an half-crown rate. But the ingenious author of *Observations on the Poor's Laws*, says, that in the year 1680, the amount over the kingdom was but £665,392; in 1764, £2,200,000; and in 1774, above three millions; which last is 6s. in the pound on the land assessment. What he takes his data from, I know not. If his account be true, whatever he may include in this monstrous sum, or however it may correspond with what we find to be true here, the more reason there is to see a better oeconomy restored.

The infant poor having been, for many ages past, consigned to an early grave, are now so well preserved, that we find 425 actually placed out apprentice and to service in one year. It is to be hoped, the state will be enriched by the many thousands who may be preserved, tho' the gross number should never exceed 6885 maintained by the parochial tax in these cities. The law for their preservation, is yet but eight years old: as one will succeed another, five times 425 may in a few years be placed out, especially if they are kept in the country.

Nothing is more apparently necessary to the common good, than that parochial charity should be given to some out-pensioners, by a weekly allowance, as well as to maintain the inhabitants of workhouses; but where the strictest enquiries are not made, it encourages some to be idle. I have seen such a pensioner begging in the streets; but upon enquiry found he was incapable of work, and that the allowance made him was not more than sufficient to pay his lodging: How then was he to live? It seems most reasonable that *such* persons should be received into the workhouse. Others there are who being aged and infirm, or having a number of young children to support, must be assisted in their own habitations, where they will live cheaper, and earn more by their labour, than being sure of their food and raiment, shut up within the wretched walls of a workhouse.

Some *paupers* bred to mechanical occupations, such as *taylors* and *shoemakers*, tho' they cannot find a support by their art, in the world at large,

large, on account of their age and infirmities, being set to work in their proper business, in the workhouse, contribute to ease the parish. The proper clue can be found only by making the experiment.

There is a class of occasional *paupers*, who at certain seasons of the year gain a support by hay-making and hop-picking, who are either improvident, or unable through ignorance, or want of industry and cleanliness in external appearance, to make any *further* provision for themselves; nor can it happen, but that some, whose misery is the effect of idleness, will become objects of the parochial charity, to save human nature from disgrace. I have often lamented, that there is not more pride among the sons and daughters of the poor, to prevent the aged parent from becoming a burthen to the parish: but in this instance, we see filial piety give place to conjugal and paternal love; and too often to *vice* and *folly*.

After the aged persons are got within the walls of a workhouse, not having been accustomed to spinning or knitting, they become so much the more wretched and useless to themselves. In all workhouses, there is a considerable number of old women between 55 and 80, who have out-lived their husbands, I believe not less than 25 or 30 in 100, who are a dead burthen on the parish. These, and the *old men paupers*, might be much better in the country, whether in little colonies, or as the *county houses of industry* are said to be managed: they would do something towards their own support, if they were to enjoy the fruits of it. The great difficulty, is to find proper persons charitable enough to superintend such colonies. It must be obvious, that were a greater degree of attention shewn to the labouring part of mankind, by a stricter discipline, and by promoting labour, as essential to the comforts of life, the *poor* themselves, and their children, would alleviate the greatest part of the misery they now suffer. A smaller number of *paupers* would take refuge in a workhouse, and of these many would support a degree of dignity, to which they are now strangers. The fault lies more among the affluent than the indigent. The master is responsible for his pupil; and in the great view of life and manners, it is impossible to leave social duties neglected, and at the same time answer the great ends and purposes of our being.

With respect to *cleanliness* and *sweet air*, however these may depend on industry, there must be *space*. It is a *crime*, which universally prevails, that the indigent part of mankind make their cottages too small. As this may be ascribed to poverty, it is an object of *consideration* for the more intelligent and superior classes of the people.

In regard to the aged, who are constrained to take refuge in a workhouse; the next least evil, is to make them *good for something*, were it only to open and shut windows, and contribute to sweeten the air. In general, they think of little more, than how the air shall feel comfortable, by warmth. All numerical curiosity and distinctions are absorbed, when the immediate care of our fellow-creatures is in question: By early discipline and instruction, they may be qualified to get their bread, by spinning and knitting within-doors, when the season does not admit of their working in the fields. *Paupers* should be taught, from their infancy, that cleanliness, producing sweet-air, contributes to health, as health promotes industry; and that moral and religious instructions, are the truest friends to a virtuous and a happy life.

Under these heads we might arrange the parochial part. Still the first object is to provide space, as necessary to the division of the proper classes of the inhabitants: the purity of the air they breathe: the conversation they hold: and the several kinds of work they perform. Cleanliness, in this view, is the first regulation to take place, in establishing the oeconomy of such houses.

This leads us to a more immediate enquiry, how many *paupers* a workhouse ought to receive, according to its situation and dimensions; for it ought on no consideration to exceed the number limited. There are but few parishes, in these vast cities, which have a workhouse big enough to contain, with the least degree of propriety, above half the number usually crowded into it. When these houses were built, it is presumed the number of *paupers* was not half so great, as at present: there was not so much wealth; so much misery created by wealth and luxury; nor so much inattention to moral and social duties. The

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parish poor can never be properly accommodated without giving them room to breathe and sleep in pure air; to divide the healthy from the diseased; the old from the young; the turbulent from the sober; the schools of the children, from the tumultuous assembly of profligate adults; the dormitories from the eating-rooms; and the working-rooms from both. This gross want of distinction, deters some virtuous distressed persons, from seeking this *assylum* for their temporal calamities, which the laws wisely meant to afford them, while it operates to bring others into an idle and profligate habit.

In the mean time, misery reigns as it were merely for want of cleanliness, which is generally as ill calculated to promote industry, as to inculcate a due sense of moral and religious obligations. Such ought to be the pillars of our police, and glorious ones they would be, if gentlemen, or persons of education, would act as if they thought themselves bound by the order of Providence, to take the charge of governing the poor. Their patriotism might then be better settled, and understood.

It being an undeniable fact, that these workhouses are so circumstanced, there are two remedies very obvious: the alternative is to build more room; or receive a smaller number of the poor at a time: the number being limited as prudence, humanity, and justice may dictate, upon a fair survey, and under the restraint of a law, to be made for the purpose, the question will be no longer asked by overseers and governors of the poor, "What are we to do with the paupers when they are sent to us by justices of the peace?"—They would be then sure what they must *not* do with them. They must not bring above a certain number into their workhouse: They are to accommodate others in some other place.

The custom of receiving an indefinite number, subverts the best economy: it hazards the breeding an epidemical disease. I have often wondered, that the plague has not issued forth from the gates of a workhouse, to mow down the inhabitants of these vast cities. How often it really occasions disorders of the most morbid nature, particu-

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larly among the common people, is not difficult to comprehend. Take any given number of people in a workhouse, of the same age and state of health as those out of it, and see what the comparative mortality will be. Nothing can be more obvious, than that the present mode of receiving without limitation, and crowding a house with numbers, is not less dangerous to the community at large, than it is cruel to the individual. It is destructive of order, oeconomy and *police*, and in a great measure destroys the very end and design of the law. The difference of keeping a workhouse cleanly and dirty, I know in one instance, was one person in five, in the mortality of adults. I do not say but that the mortality in both cases, was very large, owing to its being crowded. The worse health the poor are in, the less fit they are to return into the world, and get their bread; and the less industrious they are, through a defect of room for labour, the greater burthen they will become to the parish.

With regard to the children, it taints their blood; it nips their growth; it gives them palid countenances, and endangers their lives. The congregating numbers is always unsalutary; but the doctrine of an *ungiven number* in a *given space*, is a solecism peculiar to our *London* workhouses; and the strongest evidence that can be given of the complaints which we often hear; tho' it is not always apparent from what cause such complaints arise. In a word, it is one of those rank absurdities, at the thought of which *common sense* falls into convulsions.

How far this injurious practice derives its origin from an opinion of the policy of taking paupers into workhouses, rather than assisting them as indigent persons, in their proper habitations, is not so easy to determine, as that many of these objects are in a filthy condition, and consequently require so much the greater quantity of space and water, to purify them. To congregate such persons in numbers, as if their misery warranted their being crowded, resembles much the loading the weakest beast with the heaviest burthen, because he stands quiet to receive it. A fellow-creature is in a state of indigence, therefore let him be poisoned! We do not say this in so many words; but how often do we

suffer the tyranny of custom to enslave us, and pervert the gracious designs of Providence? We forget that he who saves another from perishing, is by the mercies of Heaven, so far the glorious instrument of his own preservation! Were our own parents or children condemned to suffer wantonly, by infected air, should we not shudder with horror? If they were to complain that the common bounty of Heaven, and the balm of the soul, is withholden from them, we should revolt against the tyranny of such a custom! Politically considered, this practice is as injurious to the public, as it is cruel to the individual.

Were the number of paupers limited, so that good order and oeconomy could be preserved, the poor would have a greater respect for themselves. Half the miseries which are spread over the face of the earth, arise from mankind forsaking their own dignity, and the other half, from being forsaken by their neighbours.

To bring the argument home to the heart; if good order and regular police is the question: if the duties of humanity and religion are of eternal obligation: if experience has taught, that unlimited admission into workhouses renders them for the most part *lazarettos*, and the greater scenes of misery and idleness: if the people are possessed of a notion that their poor's rates are ill employed, *as in such instances must be acknowledged*; shall we longer countenance this strange custom of receiving an unlimited number, oftentimes full thrice as many as can be properly accommodated? To what end and purpose was the celebrated statute of 43 of *Eliz.* thrice revised and amended, if after the course of so many years, and these days of glorious improvements, we prostitute the honours of our renowned ancestors, and become careless of that regular national *police* so happily blended with true charity, the care of the old and infirm; and the employment of the youthful growing into manhood? If such a conduct is not calculated to prepare the aged for eternity; nor to breed up the rising generation with such a decent regard to society and habit of good order, as appears to be the proper foundation of the happiness of a nation, what are we about? Every evil in society may be traced to the want of order.

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vanced in years, suffer all the inconveniences and dangers I have related, cannot be so easily proved. I do not mean to aggravate the evil; it does not predominate equally in all workhouses, nor in the same degree, always in the same workhouse; but in general the custom of crowding these places, is a monstrous abuse of humanity; very dangerous in a great city, and subversive of every end of salutary police. *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R XIV.

A Curious detail of the progress of *police* in regard to the poor, is lately published (a). By this we see how civilization and sound policy, by protecting those whom Providence has placed in the lower sphere of life, has advanced. Two bills are now depending in *your house*, from the county of *Norfolk*, for establishing *houses of industry* upon the plan of the eight already established in *Norfolk* and *Suffolk*. These, it is said, answer the good end of their intended institution, in training up children in religion and industry; in providing the old and disabled with comfortable relief; in stimulating the lazy and profligate to be of some service, instead of injury to the public; and in saving great expences in the poor rates. If this proves to be the case, we may learn from them something useful for our conduct in these great cities. Where much misery is thrown into a vast heap, it is difficult to divide the parts capable of repair and amendment.

By this detail (b), it appears that *Alfred the Great*, *Edgar*, *Henry II.* *Edward I.* *Edward II.* *Richard II.* *Henry IV.* *Henry V.*
Henry

(a) By the Rev. Mr. Potter.

(b) "The great *Alfred* was not more illustrious for his naval arrangements, and decisive victory in the forest of *Brubam*, than for his civil police, and those laws which constitute a great part of the happiness we now enjoy. *England* being divided into shires, these into hundreds, the hundreds into tythings; each house-holder was responsible for his family, each tything for its house-holders, each hundred for its tythings, and each county for its hundreds. This effectually checked the outrages of those insolent vagabonds who had infested every part of the kingdom. That no part of his people might be neglected, *Alfred* ordained that the poor should be sustained by parsons and rectors of churches, and also by the parishioners, so that none should die for want of sustenance: He assigned *one-half* of his revenues for religious and charitable uses, *one-fourth* of which was appropriated to the relief of the disabled.

Henry VII. Henry VIII. down to Queen Elizabeth, were all attentive, in a greater or lesser degree, to the same common principle, and followed

disabled and aged poor. This truly great man, in a barbarous age and tumultuous times, restrained the idle and disorderly, encouraged the sober and industrious, and relieved the old and infirm, drawing the great outlines of that body of laws, which the prudence of after-ages hath been continually endeavoring to fill up. In the course of almost eight hundred years, much might be expected; yet in effect little has been done. We in a great measure retain the divisions of *Alfred*: many are the laws that, from time to time, have been made to restrain the vagabond poor, but many evils remain as a reproach to the nation. Our improvements in agriculture, manufactures, trade, commerce, and the liberal arts, have given the industrious poor a support beyond the comprehension even of *Alfred's* enlarged ideas. But amidst all our public opulence and private wealth, the distresses, the miseries of the disabled and aged poor are such as the fiery-tressed *Dane*, even in those ferocious days, would have beheld with pity.

It may perhaps be entertaining, it must be interesting, to trace these laws from that early æra to the present period.

For one hundred and sixty-six years after the death of *Alfred*, the invasions and conquests of the *Danes* gave but little leisure to attend to further improvements on this head; for where all were miserable, none could attend to the miseries of particulars; only we may observe, that in every little interval of peace, the king that most closely adher'd to the regulations of *Alfred*, most effectually promoted the happiness of his people; of which the reign of *Edgar* is a proof. The three first monarchs of the *Norman* line were attentive to enslave, not to redress. The reign of *Stephen* was one tumultuous scene of civil war. From the accession of *Henry II.* to the deposition of *Richard II.* an almost uninterrupted series of foreign and domestic wars, the encroachments of insolent and avaritious *Popes*, and the glorious efforts of our noble ancestors in the cause of liberty engaged their chief attention. By the 15 *Rich. II.* c. 6. it was agreed and assented, that in the appropriation of benefices, the Diocesan should ordain a convenient sum of money to be paid and distributed yearly of the fruits and profits of the churches in his diocese, to the poor parishioners, in aid of their living and sustenance, for ever. *Henry IV.* was only solicitous to secure his usurp'd sovereignty; but in the 4th year of his reign, he confirm'd the above-mention'd statute of *Richard*. The reign of *Henry V.* was more celebrated for glories, conquests, triumphs abroad, than for civil regulations at home. The next weak reign is a disgrace to our annals, exhibiting nothing but losses, confusion and anarchy; and from the battle of *Blœre-Heath* in 1459, to that of *Bosworth* in 1485, the disputes between the contending houses of *York* and *Lancaster* had distracted the nation, and wasted its richest blood.

During this long period, though we find some statutes regulating the wages of *servants*, *labourers*, and *artificers*, and some ill-policied acts for the restraint and punishment of vagabond beggars, yet I fear we must look for the able poor in general in the demesnes of the great,

followed the plan which *Alfred* had laid down. To importune the people to save their souls by *alms-giving*, was not found to be a sufficient motive;

great, where they were treated as slaves, considered as cattle, joint tenants of the glebe, and transferred from master to master with the lands which they were doomed to cultivate: yet they were *fed, lodg'd, and cloath'd*. The aged and impotent poor were supported under the old regulations, somewhat enlarged as the number of *abbies* and *monasteries*, and their revenues encreased, (v. statutes 3 *Edw. I. c. 1.* 35 *Edw. I. c. 1.* 9 *Edw. II. c. 11.*) at the charge of *ecclesiastics*; by the hospitality of *religious houses*; and the benevolence of *private persons*.—Nor ought we to think that their necessities were imperfectly attended to, if we reflect that the genius of the times inclined to *religion*, and the genius of their religion strongly incited to *deeds of alms*. Hence princes, and the great barons, founded *abbies, monasteries, and priories*; and the rich of inferior degree imitated these public acts of beneficence in private charities.

The subtle and rigid policy of *Henry VII.* was directed through every part with an uncommon attention and profound sagacity. By the 19 *Hen. VII. c. 12* beggars are to repair, in order to be maintained, to the place where they were born, or else to the place where they last dwelled or made their abode by the space of *three years*.

The passions of *Henry VIII.* though insolent and impetuous, were often productive of the greatest good, and sometimes temper'd with the greatest humanity. In the 27th year of his reign, he seized the small *abbies, &c.*: he required that all, to whom these houses should be granted, should keep an honest and *continual house* and household in the same site or precinct, under the penalty of 6l. 13s. 6d. for every month so offending. This was a prelude to his great design of dissolving all the *abbies*. The same year he passed another act for the relief of the poor. This requires all cities, towns and hamlets, to succour, find and keep their respective poor, by *voluntary and charitable alms*, that none of them shall be compelled to beg, on pain that every parish making default shall forfeit 20s. a month.—To compel every sturdy vagabond to be kept to continual labour.—To put to service children under fourteen, and above five years of age, that live in idleness, or be taken begging.—It requires the churchwardens, or two of the most substantial inhabitants of every parish, to gather such charitable and voluntary alms with boxes on Sundays, and other festival days, or otherwise, in a good and discreet manner.—It also requires every preacher, parson, vicar, and curate, on all occasions to exhort the people to be *liberal*, and bountifully to extend their charitable alms towards the comfort and relief of the impotent, decrepit, indigent and needy people, and for the setting and keeping to work the able poor.—It also makes such collectors accountable to their respective parishes *quarterly*; and orders that books shall be kept in every parish of the money collected, and how disposed of, such collector not continuing in his office longer than one year.

The next advance was to an orderly and regular police. By the 1 *Edw. VI. c. 3.* the poor, being impotent and aged, not being vagabonds, were to be provided for, by the places wherein they were born, or where they had been most conversant and abiding by the space of *three years*, in tenancies, cottages, or other convenient houses, there to be relieved and cured by

motive: When monkish bigotry, and the enthusiasm of popery ceased, charity for the distressed required a more permanent regulation. But it was

the devotion of good people. And if any such persons not being lame or impotent, can labour in any manner of work, such city, town, parish, or village, shall either in common provide some such work for them, or appoint them to such as will find them work, for their meat and drink.—By 5 and 6 *Edw. VI. c. 2.* this voluntary contribution began to be reduced to a certainty; the parson, vicar, or curate, and the churchwardens, having in a book the names of all the inhabitants and house-holders, and of all the impotent and aged poor within their respective parishes, were required on a certain Sunday, when the people were at church, and had heard God's holy word, gently to ask of every one what they in charity were disposed to give towards the relief of the poor; the same was to be written in the said book. If any person, able to give, frowardly refused, or discouraged others, the parson and churchwardens were gently to exhort him; and if they could not prevail, the parson should certify it to the bishop of the diocese, who would send for him, and by charitable ways and means induce and persuade him.

Elizabeth found her kingdom in a different situation from the greatest of her predecessors, and knew how to improve her advantage. Her grandfather's artful policy had in a great degree annihilated the power of the great *Barons*; the poor therefore had no longer a resort to their castles, and a support in their pride and turbulence.—No longer could they croud for relief at the hospitable gates of the rich *abbies* and *monasteries*; these were all dissolved by her father; and he had abolished the disgraceful custom of begging. The long and bloody wars, which had spread desolation over the land, had ceased with the accession of *Henry VII.* so that the nation was full of people; many new manufactures were introduced; commerce flourished; and the arts were cultivated; good policy therefore, as well as humanity, required a firm and permanent support for the poor.

By the 5 *Eliz. c. 3.* she renew'd the statute of 5 and 6 *Edw. VI.* in all its lenity, but provided against the obstinacy of the refuser; the bishop was to bind him by recognizance in the sum of 10*l.* to appear at the next sessions; and if he refuseth to be bound, to commit him. At the said sessions, the justices were gently to persuade him; if he would not be persuaded, it shall be lawful for the said justices, with the churchwardens, or one of them, to seize, tax, and limit, according to their good discretions, what sum the said obstinate person shall pay weekly towards the relief of the poor within the parish where he dwells. And if he shall refuse to pay the same, the said justices, or two of them, shall commit him to jail, until he shall pay the sum so appointed.

This 5 of *Eliz.* we see, was contrary to the spirit of all the former laws; in the 14th year of the Queen's reign, on this act, devised for the compulsion of a few obstinate individuals, was constructed the general assessment, which intended the ease and relief of all. This was again revised and amended, and in her 43d year it receiv'd its finish'd form, and became the law by which the poor have ever since been order'd and supported.

By

was not till the *third* amendment and correction of the statutes of this wife queen, *i. e.* from the 5th to the 43d year of her reign, that it appeared

By the 43d *Eliz.* the churchwardens, and four, three, or two substantial house-holders in each parish, are nominated yearly under the hand and seal of two or more justices of the peace, and called *overseers* of the poor of the same parish. These are to take order, by and with the consent of two or more such justices, for setting to work the children of the poor, and all such persons as having no means to maintain themselves use no ordinary and daily trade to get their living by:—to raise by taxation a convenient stock of materials to set the poor on work;—to raise competent sums of money towards the necessary relief of the old and infirm;—and to apprentice the children of the poor. The said justices, or any one of them, may send to the house of correction, or common gaol, such as shall not employ themselves to work, being appointed thereunto as aforesaid.—Such parish officers are empower'd to contract with the lords of the manors, and upon waste or common ground within their parish to *build convenient houses of dwelling for the impotent poor*; and to place more families than one in one cottage or house. And sufficient powers are given to assess and levy such sums of money.

The custom of former times, and the voice of former laws, had joined the parson, vicar, or curate, with the churchwardens, in the duty of relieving the poor, which indeed originally was solely an *ecclesiastical* matter: this statute has divorc'd from the office, the man whose education tends to give him a more liberal and ingenuous turn of mind; whose holy calling should make him the natural guardian of the poor; whose rank and character would give him a proper weight in the little councils of his parish. The power is committed to the churchwardens, and two or more overseers. The churchwarden thinks himself exempted from the trouble; and the overseer, having received the sanction of the justices, enters upon and exercises his brief authority for *half his year*, and then resigns it to his colleague for the remaining half, neither one nor the other having any relish for the duty, but as it may administer to his gain. This is the practice of many parishes in the kingdom, and however wrong *communis error facit jus*. Mean time the persons, the liberties, the lives of all the poor within his district, whose unhappy circumstances compel them to ask for relief, are at the sole arbitrement of this petty dictator. The statute indeed provides that he shall be a substantial householder; but this *substantial* householder is oftentimes indigent, ignorant, inattentive, or avaricious and inhuman; and under the most barbarous oppression, the poor, by this act, have no power of appeal.

These officers have a power to set the poor on work, and to provide materials for such purpose. This is in the true spirit of good policy: but no power is given the magistrate to compel the overseers, if they neglect it, to set the poor on work, or provide materials for the purpose. No power is given for hiring or erecting a common house for such work, which in all respects is useful, in some absolutely necessary, where the able poor man is not skill'd in works of *flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron, &c.* or the unemploy'd labourer in husbandry, of whom the village poor mostly consist.

peared absurd to *compel people to give, or trust to voluntary contributions*. That this queen meant to restrain population, (b) by limiting apprenticeships

Such as shall not employ themselves to work, being so appointed, the justices may send to the house of correction, or the common gaol of the county; and this, I presume, on the complaint of the overseer. The complaint may be partial, may be aggravated: if it be just, the punishment is disproportionate to the offence; it is the punishment of felons. *This cannot be right.*

No provision is made for educating the children of the poor, and training them up in habits of industry, and the principles of religion, till they shall be of age to be apprentic'd. This is a radical defect.

(b) Such children shall be bound to be apprentices, the man-child till he shall come to the age of twenty-four years, the woman-child to the age of twenty-one years, or to the time of her marriage. The Maiden Queen was here attentive to the delicacy of her maiden subjects; but such long servitude is cruel, impolitic, and pregnant with evils. The integrity of manners, and gracious simplicity of *Elizabeth's* golden days could not admit the thought that any men, to whom the care and management of the poor should be committed, could ever, by an ill-timed parsimony and an unfeeling selfishness, abuse their trust to the oppression of the poor.

But in good time experience discovered a melancholy truth which had escaped the sagacity of her able ministers. The statute of 3 *William and Mary*, found cause to complain of many inconveniencies that daily arose by reason of the unlimited power of churchwardens and overseers, who frequently upon frivolous pretences, but chiefly for their own private ends, gave relief to what persons they thought fit. It also found cause to complain that such officers were often capable of mispending, and applying to their own use, the collections for the poor, and other public monies relating to their churches and parishes, to the great prejudice of such parishes, and the poor. And it made provisions to punish and prevent such enormities.

This statute seems to be the great charter of the poor man's right of appeal; not express'd indeed in the statute, probably not intended; but under colour of the proviso in the said act, it seems they took occasion frequently to apply to the justices, and from their humanity were frequently reliev'd in distresses, which the obdurate overseer could not be mov'd to pity—This was thought to have been carried to excess; to remedy which it was enacted by 9 *Geo. c. 7.* that no justice of peace shall order relief to any poor person, until oath shall be made of some matter which he shall judge to be a reasonable cause of relief, and that the person had by himself, herself, or some other, applied for relief at some vestry or other public meeting of the parishioners, or to two of the overseers, and was by them refused to be relieved; and until such justice hath summoned them to shew cause why such relief should not be given, and the person so summoned hath been heard, or made default to appear. The magistrate however

ships to the age of 24, I have no conception: This part of her law, which I have made the subject of one of my letters, seems to derive its origin from the infancy of manufactory and the low state of agriculture, being calculated in those early days to encourage the manufacturer and farmer to take *paupers* apprentices.—The law now operates as a prohibition to marriage; and therefore ought to be universally exploded, instead of remaining in full force, except where particular acts of parliament direct the time to be restrained to twenty-one years.

The wise ministers of *Elizabeth* did not foresee, or knew not how to provide against those events which the wisdom of *after-times* has been unequal to. Every day proves, that simplicity, virtue and moral rectitude, march through life together: as deceit, vice and immorality maintain their pace. We are become rich beyond measure; and making our learning subservient to our pride, our pride administers to our rebellion against our religion; and the father of mankind beholds his family, in the persons of the poor, very frequently ignorant and idle, and

however remained the friend, the advocate, the patron, the protector of the poor; he heard their complaints, he adjudg'd them relief, his power was discretionary, and his award final; and every honest and good man rejoic'd to see the common cause of humanity supported by so respectable an authority. But behold the event! The pauper abuses his right of appeal: the overseer is often cruel: the justice redresses: the overseer complains: the authority of the justice soon receives a check that weakens its influence, and well-nigh annihilates its benefit to the poor: By 17 Geo. 2. c. 38. which enacts, that if any person shall be aggrieved by any thing done by any of his majesty's justices of the peace, he may appeal to the next Quarter-Sessions.

Thus by our present laws the churchwardens and overseers are the legal guardians of the poor; should these be cruel, oppressive, and dead to pity, the poor may apply to a vestry:—but in most parishes such meeting is held but once in the month, in many but twice in the year:—they may apply to the two overseers; but these may live at a distance, may be difficult to be found, may refuse the poor access to their presence: mean time hunger becomes more clamorous and importunate every hour, and sickness continues its ravages with uncontroll'd fury; what then is perishing misery to do?—But suppose them found, suppose them summoned, suppose them order'd to relieve: the delinquents themselves are to execute that order; they set the order at defiance; they appeal to the Quarter Sessions; that may be three months distant; must the poor man and his distress'd family continue starving all that time?—Alas, there is no remedy!—See the Case in *Burn's History of the Poor Laws*. p. 284.

and of course vicious, for want of instruction and discipline. The labourer or husbandman cannot be set to work where no labour is provided for him: and he is deemed no object of *charity*, because he is able to work; and if nobody is compelled to employ him in his village, what is he to do? If he travels from thence in search of work without a *certificate*, he is subject to be rejected by the tyranny of parish officers. By the statute of 8. & 9. *Will. c. 30.* certificates are allowed to be given, to prevent such cruelty: but as the parish is not compelled to grant the certificate, it is in the power of a churchwarden to defeat it.

The poor man's property is his labour, which in most cases has a certain price in certain places: if you demand of a *mason* to work for eight-pence because he wants work, when he knows his labour to be worth *eighteen-pence a day*, do you not rob him of his property? If in disdain of such treatment he leaves you, and he is subject to be hunted as a wolf, for not having a *certificate*, will you not say this is an apparent defect in our laws: Is it not narrowing the bounds of policy and humanity? *Overseers* being men of sentiments, will see how indigence may be injured. "The tongue may utter no complaint, when the tear of distress hangs trembling on the eye. Great distress often silences clamour, as penury depresses the spirits. Those who frequent work-houses may often see the palid countenance and emaciated cheek in the persons of those whose modesty restrains their complaints: and many sink into the grave without making their misery known, rather than hazard an insult, or have their misery fed, as if it were meant only to protract it.—Complaints of parish officers who are to relieve, is making the offender the judge;" and tho' some paupers are insolent beyond bearing, and ought to be punished by order of the magistrate, if the overseer loses his temper and commences tyrant, he will aggravate the misery.

As a proof how defective all human institutions are: how liberty is made to militate against humanity: how necessary virtue is, to render mankind happy: all the efforts hitherto made, have been found light in the

the balance : Your *house* has apprehended the remedy proposed to be worse than the disease. The customs and manners of every respective town or village, determines a great deal : the generosity of individuals, much more. In the mean time, virtue supported by wealth, or wealth ennobled by virtue, spread a glory round : they enlighten the horizon, and Nature smiles with applause. When I have seen a thrasher in the neighbourhood of a pious humane *landlord*, or *landlady*, as I once did in *Kent*, thrashing with his two sons, from twelve to fourteen, each with a flail proportioned to his strength ; it naturally suggested the idea that food and raiment will ever be the reward of industry, and that the indigent being properly encouraged, only age, sickness, or the early death of parents, makes any poor's-house necessary.

With regard to county workhouses, it may be observed, that the removal of the aged from their abode, and the comforts which hoary locks have a title to, after a life spent in honest labour, requires very serious consideration : and so does the congregating the rising generation of the poor—for if they are not familiarized to a quiet domestic life, and to know the distinctions of good and evil from practice, the theory of piety, or learning the catechism, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, will hardly be ballast enough to keep them steady. On the other hand, if no instruction can be procured in town or village, under the care of proper persons, the county house of industry is the most proper assylum for the young pauper, who is to be put into the world ; and the aged who is going out of it. We may deplore the necessity of congregating the youthful or the aged, as a state of society not agreeable to the ordinary conditions of human life, *but it appears to be necessary*. He is the best friend to the poor, who observes most attentively how liberal Nature is. We are the niggards : She is kind, even to prodigality. We are lazy : She is never tired ! Every creature is supplied ; and tho' man is the most helpless of all animals for six or eight years, he becomes able to repay the obligation he owes to society. As the *earth* was made for us all, it is our common parent, a small portion of it will support a man. Teach the child the use of the spade, the shovel, and the hough, at a very early period :—Prepare the soil, that it may work easily : let his tools be made of a size and weight adapted to his strength : give him

fair

fair play to exert his imitative powers: let him sow, plant, reap, cut, and gather in: Let him see the marvellous efforts of useful industry: Let him eat the pulse and roots, which his own labour produces; and understand how the overplus may be exchanged for what he stands in need of: Let him see that the penny's-worth of his turnips, which he sells, purchases 2 or 3 pints of milk, which being boiled with water and mixed with another penny's-worth of good oatmeal, with a penny's-worth of rice, or *two*-pence in bread, will furnish a meal for five or six such little men as himself.

Let him not touch butter, sugar, tea, or any such expensive, unnecessary food. Shew him that the use of *butter* is horrible waste, the milk being not only incomparably more pleasing to the taste, but goes much farther as nourishment. If he indulges himself in animal substance, let him learn what *cooking* will produce. The charge of bread, firing and cooking excepted, I once dined on *animal substance* at no higher cost than three-fifths of a penny(a).

But he cannot spend his whole time in the field, nor in the garden, in cultivating the earth for food. When he is under shelter, let him learn to spin wool or flax, to provide himself with clothes; and knit stockings for his own use, and others of a finer kind, for sale: thus by the force of spinning and knitting, and the use of the plough and the spade, he will soon feel his own importance, and how much his happiness under God depends on his industry. Thus he may learn, that every human being must work or die, and become a more practical philosopher at twelve, than his grandfather may happen to be at fourscore.

The

(a) This was an experiment tried—An ox head costing 2s. weight 20lb. with 10 oz. of the best oatmeal; a peck of green pease when at the cheapest rate; 20 oz. of onions; 1 oz. of pounded pepper; 5 oz. of salt; a burnt bottom of a loaf; a sprig of time. These boiled 3½ hours in 90 pints of water: it was reduced to 52 pints, or 60 messes, of near ¾ths of a pint each, of admirable soup; and 2½ oz. of very good meat, without a bone, to each mess. These ingredients costing 11d. being in all 2s. 11d. I found that with 7 or 8 oz. of bread, I had a good meal. In lieu of green pease; split-pease, rice, scotch-barley, &c. do full as well. Such a dinner for 2d. is common.

The country is the only proper scene for *paupers*. A London overseer of the poor may remonstrate against this doctrine; but does he imagine the village cottager lives at the expence of *five or six pence* a day, as his *paupers* do? The cottager not being immured, enjoys the satisfaction and freedom which a country life affords.

What I have said, is common to the virtuous when they are put in a method of getting their bread, and making their children contribute to their support. If an humane and intelligent master, or landlord, will think for them, and put them in a method of employing their children, my suggestions may be easily carried into execution.

Girls should learn early to spin, knit and sew. Some duties in the field are occasionally required of them, and besides their domestic offices which respect cleanliness and whole or patched garments, the knowledge of such cookery as I have mentioned, is of the highest importance. Of this our common people are amazingly ignorant, which is one reason why they live at a much higher expence than the *French*.

There are many parishioners, who rather than be at the charge of *ten pounds* for a year or two, to put a family in a way of living, will suffer a tax of *five pounds per annum* through their own lives, and leave their children with the same burthen: Others, instead of attending to the execution of the most salutary *police* in the country, run up to *London* every year in search of vain pleasures and amusements, and never bestow a thought on their villagers. If they leave the indigent to *take care, or no care*, of themselves, the consequences cannot but be unhappy!

Such is not the case of every landlord. I am acquainted, at this time, with a gentleman, who is upon a plan of giving his cottagers each an eighth of an acre of land adjoining their cottage: he tells me, the produce of this small portion is worth to them *30s.* a year. He also means that his farmers shall sell them a stated quantity of milk at a certain price; and he devotes a neighbouring copse to them for fuel; and by supplying their wants prevents the infamous practice of *pilfering wood*, and breeding up their children to thievery. If a man's family in-

crases, he will allow more garden ground, that the children may be all occupied on the spot where they were born—And if they happen to be strangers from *London*, they may be as easily instructed as natives of the soil.

Where is the parish in which there is not some *waste land*? And if there is none, it is capable of maintaining the greater number of people. If you who are possessed of lands, and reign lord paramount in your little domain, and mean that your vassals should thrive, manage them with skill and humanity. If you would rather appear in a rich birth-day suit, than see forty of your tenants, or husbandmen and their children, well clad, throw your patriotism into the first pond in your way, and talk no more of politics or humanity.

That there are some benevolent persons in every class, needs no elaborate proof: but very few gentlemen of fortune in these days will submit to the drudgery of the office in question. As to the overseers who have been devoid of sentiment, *Doctor Burn*, the celebrated writer on the Poor's Laws, has given us a description at which *charity* weeps with equal sorrow and indignation. Of such, the Doctor says, "In practice, the office of the Overseer of the Poor seems to be understood to be this: To keep an extraordinary look-out, to prevent persons coming to inhabit without certificates, and to fly to the justices to remove them; and if a man brings a certificate, then to caution all the inhabitants not to let him a farm of soil a year, and to take care to keep him out of all parish offices: To warn them, if they will hire servants, to hire them half-yearly, or by the month, by the week, or by the day, rather than by any way that shall give them a settlement; or if they do hire them for a year, then to endeavour to pick a quarrel with them before the year's end, and so to get rid of them: To maintain their poor as cheap as possibly they can at all events; not to lay out two-pence in prospect of any future good, but only to serve the present necessity: To bargain with some sturdy person to take them by the lump, who yet is not intended to take them, but to hang over them *in terrorem* if they shall complain to the justices for want of maintenance: To send them out into the country a begging (for why cannot they go, as well as others they

" will

“ will mention, who are less able in body, and the feebler they are,
 “ the more profitable will be their peregrination: To bind out poor
 “ children apprentices, no matter to whom, or to what trade, but to
 “ take especial care that the master live in another parish: To move
 “ heaven and earth, if any dispute happens about a settlement; and in
 “ that particular, to invert the general rule, and stick at no expence:
 “ To pull down cottages: To drive out as many inhabitants, and admit
 “ as few, as possible; that is, to depopulate the parish in order to
 “ lessen the Poor Rate: To be generous indeed, sometimes, in
 “ giving a portion, with the mother of a bastard child, to the reputed
 “ father, on condition that he will marry her; or with a poor widow;
 “ always provided that the husband is settled elsewhere: Or if a poor
 “ man, with a large family, appears to be industrious, *overseers* will cha-
 “ ritably assist him in taking a farm in some *neighbouring parish*, and give
 “ him 10l. to pay his first year's rent with: And if any one of their poor
 “ has a mercantile genius, they will purchase for him a box, with pins,
 “ needles, laces, buckles, and such like wares, and send him abroad in
 “ the quality of a petty chapman; with the profits thereof, and a mo-
 “ derate knack at stealing, he can decently support himself, and edu-
 “ cate his children in the same *industrious* way.—But to see that the
 “ Poor shall resort to church, and bring their children there to be in-
 “ structed; to contract with a master, that he shall procure his appren-
 “ tice at proper times to be taught to read or write; to provide a stock
 “ of materials to set the Poor on work; to see the aged and impotent
 “ comfortably sustained; the sick healed; and all of them clothed
 “ with neatness and decency: These, and such like, it is to be feared,
 “ are not so generally regarded, as the laws intended, and *the necessity*
 “ of the case requires (a).”

With regard to the state of workhouses in these cities, few if any
 overseers, in these days, act the part of such monsters in human shape;
 nor can they dispose of the *paupers* as they please. If office sometimes
 hardens the hearts of men, and render the picture drawn by this writer
 too much like the original, we are to consider that he who never made hu-

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humanity

manity his study, must take time and thought to qualify himself for an office wherein the lives of fellow-subjects are committed to his care.

I believe there have been scenes, equal to what the ingenious writer on the county houses of industry describes (a); tho' we must allow something to a poetical pen; and more to the indignation which might arise in his breast, as a man of sentiment, pleading for a reformation of manners with respect to *parish workhouses*. He says, "these miserable tenantries are many of them open to the roof like barns, with ten thousand fluttering cobwebs pendant from the thatch. If they have chambers, these are in this condition: few of them have any floor, besides the naked earth: their site and precinct is generally damp and unwholesome; the door serves to let in the light, and let out the smoke; for the windows are generally so small and so patch'd, they serve to little purpose but to admit the bleak and howling winds and driving snow; their beds are filthy masses of unsheltering rags that beggar description, many of them elevated from the bare earth only with a little rotten straw. In one room you shall find an aged couple, whose shivering limbs ach for want of better covering: contiguous to them a younger pair, with three of their children in the same bed; and in a corner of the same room a son and a daughter, each arrived at the age of puberty, couching together. In the same room lodges a decent man of 80, hourly insulted by two wanton wenches, each holding to her breast the fruits of unlawful love. One room contains three, sometimes four beds, with persons of different ages and sexes. One bed contains the husband, wife, and four children, two more lodg'd on straw. One bed contains the father, the mother, and two daughters, one of sixteen, the other of twenty years.—These are not cases of particular necessity, or particular neglect, but the common and general abuse of the Clause in the Statute of 43 *Eliz.* which empowers the Overseers to place inmates, or more families than one in one cottage or house; an abuse that deserves peculiar attention, and calls aloud for immediate redress, as it tends to extinguish every idea of delicacy, That guard which nature has planted around virtue; drives modesty by force out of the female

(a) The Rev. Mr. Potter.

female heart, and lays it open to shameless and abandon'd impurity. And in case of sickness, in case of death!—but let me not carry the imagination into such a scene of horror. In the day-time the father, if able to work, is absent at his employment; the mother is gone out to buy her black Bohea; to gather sticks; to pilfer turnips; mean time two or three infants are shut up with nakedness and hunger for their companions, or left to the care of another, itself an infant, in danger of the fire within, or the water-pit at the door. Many from 60 to 80 years of age, are thought sufficiently favour'd by being placed in these wretched dwellings, and provided with a little damp turf, that smokes rather than burns."

Thus far the Rev. Mr. *Potter* reports, and adds:—"To those whom age or infirmities have entirely disabled from working, the common allowance is two-pence halfpenny a day; and with this scanty pittance, the noblest work of God, wrapt in rags, distress'd with vermin, and tortur'd with rheumatic pains, unpitied, unvisited, drags on the unhappy remains of a life worn out in useful labour; whilst the old hunter, now stiff and disabled for the chase, is valued for his past services, and enjoys at ease the rich luxuriance of the park. The pious Overseer may haply think that these wretches in their younger time were idle or imprudent, and neglected the advantages which, if properly pursued, would have render'd their old age more comfortable; and that their present sufferings are a punishment for their former misconduct: It may be so; but he should remember that he is the substitute of Heaven, not to judge and punish, but to redress and relieve. He may haply comfort them, that, amidst the hardships they labour under, they have their liberty: but age and infirmities have depriv'd them of the liberty of action; penury, oppression, and an habit of suffering, have extinguish'd the liberty of thought; one liberty indeed is left them, the liberty to freeze, to rot, to starve in silence.—But the poor children, what have they done, that they are exposed to nakedness, hunger, and ignorance? Why are they left to trace their progress from uninstructed youth thro' idleness, insensibility, and poverty, to obduracy, violence, and vice; burdens to themselves, pests to society, and aliens from God?—If penance were a part of our religion, and to inflict that penance were my province, I would some-

times

times take the rich and great from their sumptuous and splendid luxuries, and enjoin them to visit these mansions of misery; that they might see what wretches feel, and know that this account is not imaginary, partial, or aggravated, but real melancholy matter of fact."

This zealous friend to the poor proceeds further to remark, "that one short Statute, and one single Clause, 13 and 14 Car. II. c. 12. by departing from the simplicity of the Act of 19 Hen. VII. has not only open'd the door to all the subsequent litigations and inexplicable difficulties relating to settlements and removals; but is a dreadful engine of oppression to the industrious; well therefore is it said to be "a wanton or "malicious chafe of the unhappy from one inhospitable region to "another."

In regard to workhouses in these cities, tho' they are by no means in such a situation as this ingenious gentleman represents some of his country workhouses; yet with respect to air, few persons accustomed to cleanly life can bear the stench of them, or stand the survey of such misery. This defect must be imputed to custom: the parties more immediately concerned, become slaves to *custom*; while the desire of being in office, or the fear of disobliging the sordid parishioner, restrains them. The overseer, directors, vestry clerk, or whoever takes the lead in the management of these fellow-creatures, are the persons to blame: for nothing decently practicable in an opulent parish towards preserving its poor, and rendering them industrious, should be neglected. As to *morbid* air, it were better to die under the canopy of the Heavens than suck in a pestilential vapour. The atmosphere of uncleansed garments and diseased bodies, crouded in numbers, ten times beyond what is apprehended to be proper in common life; the consequences must be maladies innumerable, tainting the blood and spoiling the constitution. One rarely finds those who have been bred up in workhouses become robust, or of any considerable stature. It is not an uncommon thing, of forty poor children between six and fourteen years of age, for half of them to be afflicted with an *inveterate itch*, which once taking possession of their habit, baffles the art of medicine, totally to eradicate.

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It is well-known that two or three adults are often crowded into a bed, tho' they hazard the poisoning each other. Sometimes two sick persons are put into the same bed; at others, one sick and the other in health; a proceeding which kicks at all pretensions to policy or humanity. As to children, I have known a workhouse so crowded that six or eight have been put into the same bed; and tho' the *paupers* sleep in apartments, the sexes divided, it makes no difference with regard to the impurity of the air.

And for what is this devastation of human life, this violence on humanity? The power given by the Statute 3 Will. & Mary, to the justices, restrains the overseer from being the sole judge of the propriety of objects for relief; but the justice still leaves it with the overseer, how and in what manner the *paupers* are to be relieved; and the overseer carrying his thoughts no farther than the present moment, the matter is reduced to a very short decision; the *paupers* are crowded into the workhouse without any regard to its ability of containing them. More than half the number of *paupers* in these cities, supposed to be proper objects of the parochial charity, are in these circumstances.

Where there are peculiar acts of parliament, appointing *governors and directors*; the overseer sometimes contends for the power of relieving such objects as he thinks proper, with regard to occasional bounty for relief to the indigent not received into the house. This also implies an absurdity: for in all cases of peculiar acts it must be supposed to transfer the power from the overseer to the *governors and directors*, and if these do not exercise the power, the crime is theirs.

As to the *pauper* not being in the house, the best information being obtained, the judgment must be exercised, and the majority must decide, remembering that whatever tends to destroy family connections, or render life less domestic, so far weakens the force of the advantages derived from a social state, and renders mankind less capable of doing, or receiving good from each other. The affections should always lean to the merciful side; and the more, as the congregating people is

a work of necessity, founded on the depravity of some, and the misfortunes of others.

As to the *plea of necessity* of obeying the *justices of the peace*, without regard to the numbers which may be already in a workhouse; it is the genuine produce of parochial prejudice, and the effect of gross ignorance and inhumanity. Wherever it prevails, a link of the chain of society is broken, and ought to be repaired, cost what it may. The effort of humanity will be repaid by a thousand good effects, and prove that we are not a *devoted people*; but that Providence in mercy to our misery points out the remedy for the disease.

The parochial orphans, or such children whose parents are in no condition to reclaim them, being sent into the country to nurse at a *proper distance*, should be there affiliated, and bred to useful labour in the field, not condemned to the fetid noxious vapours of a crowded workhouse. *This supposes that some proper person on the spot will superintend the conduct of the villagers.* The child claimed by a parent, who is capable of taking care of it, is a consideration of the most sacred nature with respect to property; but in most cases the common sense of the law, and the *right of disposing of the child*, derived from the support given to it, ought to restrain the folly or wickedness of the parent.

With regard to good *policy*, the children born in these cities whose parents are *not paupers*, joined to the number of adults who daily flock to town from the country, may be considered as abundantly sufficient to fill up the vacancies in all the drudgeries of life, and therefore there is no necessity of returning *pauper* children to town. Nor is it less obvious, that employment being found for the people here, the misfortunes which we daily behold arising from idleness, and a redundancy of people, may be in a great measure prevented.

The earth being capable of maintaining a much greater number of inhabitants on this island than are found in it, were we more attentive to population, we might also be more attentive to the means of the support of life. You will hear it said by some of your country people,

who are too short-sighted to see the consequences of their own principles, "What! send your *London* children to us? We are over-stocked with people already; and would rather see the devil than a *London* child." If they had any sense of the public good, they would gladly contribute to relieve *London*; the head being so filled with blood as to threaten an apoplexy. They should also reflect, that the time cannot be very far off when they will be called on for their quota of men, fit to bear arms. If they have not sought for the means of employing young persons in *agriculture* and *manufactory*, so as to contribute to their own maintenance and the support of the aged, the crime lies at their own door. But they tell us, they are afraid a child tainted with the foul disease may be brought into their parish. It is well when no man nor woman there is in such circumstances: but if there is the least suspicion of such an evil, whether it be a *London*, or a *country child*, they must nurse it by hand. The parent of the child, as happens in most cases of illegitimacy, as well as in the lawful way, is known.—Shall humanity and policy be laid waste from mere apprehensions of evil? And what says the gentleman of landed estate, or he whom fortune has placed in a station to be the friend, philosopher, and guide of the villager, or hind? Does he also think his riches consist in having as few people as possible, provided he can draw as large an income from his land? If he does not pride himself in having the greatest number of useful subjects on his number of acres, one may venture to pronounce he has no title to patriotism. If the mind is not enriched with that humanity which no laws relative to the poor can supply, the ends of *police*, and the happiness of the people, will drop short of the good intended. *Farewell.*

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LETTER

L E T T E R XV.

OF all the evils incident to life, none can be more pregnant with folly, or devoid of *humanity*, than the neglect of the common bounty of Heaven, with regard to sweet-air. It being so obvious, that on the quality of this, life depends, the poor have as good a title to it as the rich: but cheap as one would imagine it to be, yet by a strange kind of defect in economy the indigent are often deprived of it; and when the *doctrine* should be reduced to practice, we behold men so ignorant, hackney'd in office, or inattentive, they act as if they were really indifferent with respect to the preservation of the lives of their fellow-creatures. Were the earth exactly measured out, perhaps there may be as many acres as inhabitants: But considering that a house can be conveniently raised with rooms of sufficient height, at least four or five stories; and that the exercise of going up and down stairs, to the youthful, is productive of health, there can be no just cause of want of ground, tho' in some places it may bear ten times the price as in another. Let a city be ever so populous, the *exterior parts* of it generally afford abundant room for building on an easy ground-rent. Where great numbers are to be congregated, there ought the advantage of air to be most eagerly sought after.

The celebrated philosopher, and friend to mankind, the *Rev. Doctor Hales*, has taught us not only how to think on this subject, but what we are to do to prevent the misfortunes with which we are so apt to be overwhelmed. The number which is struck with the dart of death without any notice of their danger, by means of corrupted or impure air, is much more considerable than generally believed, especially among the youthful, who are the most susceptible of such impressions.

And as to those who are advanced in life, and their vital parts rendered tougher by time, it is no secret even to the most ignorant, what fatal events have sometimes happened. I am well convinced that I have frequently escaped by means of a sponge with vinegar, the smell of rue, or a plug of tobacco in my nose; and in the open air, by keeping to windward of the filthy object. Is it not astonishing, that this friend to mankind should have so few genuine disciples, and faithful followers, ready to furnish a liberal supply of this heavenly nourishment, by such ordinary means as reason suggests, or in some cases by such extraordinary assistance? Where many persons are congregated under one roof, there is an absolute necessity for a suitable quantity of this grand article of life, cost what it may.

There are also some obstinate prejudices to encounter: for the poor themselves are generally as ignorant, and regardless of the evils of the hour to come, as their leaders are idle and indifferent: they choose to droop and die with *heat*, rather than suffer any sensation of *cold*, and become so tender, as to be much the worse qualified for their return into the world. It is possible, so to taint the blood, that the very purity of the air shall become morbid, 'till the patient is gradually habituated to it.

It was a laughable distinction made by some of the patients in *St. George's Hospital*, when *Doctor Hales* first erected his sail ventilator. This indeed brought down too large a column of air, and offended the nurses: they objected by saying, "We do not understand what you mean by this new-fashioned air: we are contented with God Almighty's air." Their meaning was apparent; they did not consider the air they were accustomed to breathe, was corrupted. It requires some skill to guard against the *extreme*, that the pleasing and salutary effect may be felt, without any disagreeable impression.—In common cases, letting down the upper-part of a sash, administers relief (a)—Apertures in ceilings—

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Tin

(a) I have often observed in many old houses, the upper sash is fixed, and consequently this kind of ventilation prevented. In all hospitals, workhouses, and places of great resort, one of the first concerns should be, that the upper sashes of every room, be so hung as to let down as freely as the lower ones run up, for the communication of air. The upper parts of the room being the most rarified by heat, are the first rendered unfit for the support of life

Tin funnels of 8 or 10 feet long, and 6 to 12 inches diameter, with cowls to turn with the wind, are necessary in all workhouses, hospitals, theatres, small chapels, and places of occasional great resort. The velocity of the ascending air, is quickened by the length of the funnel.—Apertures communicating with the external air, on the level of the floors, are sometimes necessary, tho' in this case it may be necessary to be confined in a trunk of wood to lead up to the upper parts of the room, where the column will expand itself without being offensive, if it finds a passage out by an aperture in the ceiling. By this means life may be secured to a multitude of people, who are often panting for breath.—The common tin ventilators, made so as to create little or no noise, set in the panes of sashes, are found to be of great use. These being painted, and kept free from rust or other foulness, are very deserving the attention of every one who is solicitous to preserve a fellow-creature. In this case some situations require apertures on the opposite side, to let out the foul air. In order to prevent the foul air being communicated to other apartments, this may be accomplished by a tin funnel placed horizontally, and passing thro' any other apartment communicate with the external air. I have known an hospital ventilated only by small apertures in all the ceilings, made in a convenient corner. By this means (the lower apartments not being occupied at night) have furnished all the dormitories with sweet air. When it is necessary to purify bad air, *fumigation*, by putting a hot iron into a quantity of vinegar, is a good method. Whether pounded brimstone put in water may not answer, is a trial I never yet made. Its fumes lose all their pernicious qualities when rising from water: Brimstone being so subtil as to pervade the whole frame by lavation, may it not in part purge off the noxious particles with which the air in such places is impregnated?

In regard to the prejudices of the common people, they are so little apprehensive of their danger, as to be extremely repugnant to set windows open, upon the most proper occasions. This generally renders their situation so much the more deplorable. Form to yourself an idea of the necessity of pure air for children, that they may not be tainted by the diseases of the aged, nor one by another.

Represent to yourself how it must fare with young persons, when numbers are crouded into one bed. Imagine the most advantageous local situation, yet if the inhabitants of such houses are not kept cleanly, their clothes properly washed, or at least *aired*, they will become filthy. Should they not be obliged to beat and brush them at certain times? In regard to their *linen*, this should be particularly attended to: It must often happen, that a neglect in this instance contributes to poison themselves, and each other. Observe the virtuous poor in common life, they are ever cleanly.

It excites my wonder, that virulent and epidemical diseases do not frequently issue forth from the windows and doors of workhouses in these cities: The fact is, that before the act of the 7th of his present majesty, *all the infants* became a sacrifice to infected air: they all died, and we cannot suppose they were smothered, their throats cut, or their brains dashed out: but not one in a hundred escaped with life. Even of adults in a certain workhouse, one set of parish officers buried above 30 out of 250, in a year, more than died under the direction of another set. Those who buried the *most* made the *least* expence, and consequently considered themselves as the *ablest* officers. They kept the poor's rates so much the lower; and they plumed themselves on this account, as if money were the only standard for estimating the merit of *police*, humanity, and oeconomy, with respect to the poor.

The building and furnishing the county houses of industry for the two hundreds of *Colnies* and *Carlford*, in the county of *Suffolk*, in 1758, was attended with an expence which frightened many of the parties concerned; but the experience of eight years proved how advantageous it was. In consequence of this experiment *six* other houses have been erected in *Suffolk*; whose districts comprehend more than one-third part of that county; and one more in *Norfolk*, upon the same general plan, and under the same general regulations, a little varied as experience required; and these having been established six or eight years, demonstrate their usefulness.

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This care first discovers itself in an attention to their health. In regard to the expence of building, the yearly accounts for each parish being examined, it was found, that the incorporated parishes, without increasing their rates, could raise a sufficient sum to pay for the buildings, and as I am informed, are actually in a fair train of paying off the mortgages on their rates, and consequently of diminishing the former charge.

The house at *Bulcamp* cost £.10,000. The annual income of the rates amounted to £.3,080. The house was fitted up for the reception of the poor at *Michaelmas* 1766, and it has already saved and paid off £.3,000. The parishes in the hundred of *Blything* have in the same time saved nearly *two shillings and five-pence* in the pound (a).

“ Let us now,” says the reverend gentleman, “ take a view of the poor in these houses of industry. And here the assessment of every parish being precisely fix’d, and uniformly the same, precludes every possible advantage to penurious parsimony, and obviates every inducement to oppressive and injurious treatment: and this is the foundation of the advantages they enjoy. Here they are no longer at the mercy of the little occupier, who is perhaps but one remove from asking the relief he so cruelly denies; no longer are they under the severe necessity of crouching to him for a morsel of bread: but those in their respective parishes who are in more affluent circumstances, and we may hope, of a better understanding and more enlarged benevolence, these continue their protection and guardianship: and every gentleman in the hundreds, from whose liberal education and rank in life there is reason to expect the greatest humanity, attend the poor in these houses: even those magistrates, to whose authority the poor have often fled for refuge, and who in some cases found it difficult, and in others wanted power to relieve them, are obliged in their turns to attend them: all these act with paternal tenderness, and direct and superintend the concerns of these houses.”

This gentleman then proceeds to inform us in what the paternal tenderness consists. He says,

“ This

(b) According to what I understand from the Rev. Mr. Potter's Account, page 37.

" This care first discovers itself in an attention to their *health*. B^enignity of air and soil first determin'd the *situation* of the House; and the same idea directed its construction, thro' every apartment; where *spaciousness* and the *continual undulation of the purest breath of Heaven* remove the cause of *vitiating air*, and obviate the effects of a nauseous and putrid accumulation of it.—But as the human frame, notwithstanding all precaution, is obnoxious to distempers, *infirmaries* are provided at a *proper distance*, that the disease may not be communicated to others. The sick are carefully nurs'd, and have all the relief that medicine can afford them; skilful surgeons and apothecaries being engaged to attend them as often as occasion shall require. At *Bulcamp* there is also an *airing-house* to receive them for a time, after their recovery, that no remains of the disease may annoy others: a caution worthy of imitation (a).

The happy effect of this care appears from hence, that on the 19th of *December* last, in the house at *Shepmeadow*, of 262 poor, not one was sick.—On the 20th, in the house at *Bulcamp*, of 340, one only was slightly indisposed.—On the 21st, in the house at *Heckingham*, of 252, not one was ill."

From the state of health, we are informed of their clothing, on which health so much depends. "As soon as they are removed from their miserable cottages, and received into this hospitable mansion, they are stript of their filthy rags, made perfectly clean, and decently habited, before they are admitted to join the family; and ever after, cleanliness is required as an indispensable duty."

In regard to their food, and place of diet, he acquaints us, that "at breakfast, dinner, and supper, they are all assembled, by the ringing of a bell, in the common hall, where they are provided with wholesome and well-dress'd food, proper for their station in life, and in a liberal abundance. Their numbers, good order, and evident satisfaction, make this a very pleasing sight."—

With

(a) The convalescence of patients, is a circumstance hardly ever attended to in our work-houses in London, which I believe often occasions a relapse, and sometimes infects others.

With regard to their beds, he tells us, "these are good, well-cover'd, and clean:—every thing around them is clean,—the house in every department, and all its utensils, are neat to a degree that surprises."

In regard to the effect on society, he says, "One circumstance in their lodging is worthy of notice: To remove the objections which have been started with regard to these *houses of industry*, by rendering people indifferent to the social advantages and comforts of life, and consequently subversive of civil society; many an husband, disabled from labour by sickness, or maim'd by accident, finds a comfortable asylum here: in the Infirmary his wife, however healthy and strong, attends him, a child perhaps, in her arms, another at her knees. Every married couple has a bed and a room distinct and appropriated to themselves, which they have the liberty to lock up if they please; to retire to it when they please, undisturb'd, unintruded upon by others; and their children, if young, are lodg'd in the same, or the adjoining apartment, under the immediate care of their parents. And indeed these decent lodgings for the married, constitute one of the most striking beauties and conveniences of each house."

That a woman ought to follow her husband in all fortunes seems to be a fixed general principle. And it may hold good where there is a family, and no means of support, as in the case of a *pauper*: but it must be guarded against where the wife can be put in a way of providing for her children out of a workhouse, lest the remedy should prove a disease.—But this gentleman informs us, that "with regard to industry, whenever a person is incapable of maintaining himself and his family, the community, which takes that burden upon itself, has a right to his labour, proportion'd to his abilities, and exacted with moderation. Of the aged no labour is requir'd; their silver cord is loosed, and their golden bowl broken; the evening of their days is here made comfortable; they are rescued from want, and consign'd to respect and tranquility. To them the doors are always open, and whenever inclination and the weather tempts them abroad, and their strength permits, all proper indulgence is allow'd; or in the house they have the liberty of decent rooms; where

where they form their little parties of conversation, sit around the fire, and tell their tales of antient times." Probably the number of these will in a few years encrease, and the governors will be glad they should remain in their proper home.

From this account we learn, that "in the Infirmaries little work is expected; as the strong and healthy ought not to be there."—

As to *employment*, he says, "This is adapted to the powers of each: in the *Bulcamp House* they manufacture every kind of dress, *bats excepted*, and all the *linen* used in the house."

He then mentions the *encouragement* given them for their industry: "each receives *two-pence* in the *shilling* of what he earns; and every one who exceeds sixty years of age, receives one-half of his earning."

With regard to their *learning* and *labour*, he tells us, "the children are at school from three to five years old: from that age, during their stay in the house, they are at the allotted hours in the work-rooms; these are busy scenes of chearful industry, whilst content smiles on every little countenance."

In respect to the time they may be kept, "the *males*, by the *act*, may remain under the government of the house till they are 18, the *females* till they are 16 years old; but it gives one pleasure to observe, there is scarcely a child more than *eleven* in any of the houses; the Directors and Guardians making it a point to provide them with *services* as soon as the abilities of the child permit: the neighbouring farmers readily accept them as servants; or they are bound as apprentices; and the humanity of the *act* provides that the apprenticeship shall not exceed the term of seven years, nor extend to the males beyond the age of 21, or to the females beyond 18."

The attention to their *morals* and *religious duties* is very exact. He says, "To impress them with an habitual sense of *religion*, prayers are read every night and morning; and all that are able to attend, are oblig'd to

be present. Every *Wednesday* and *Friday*, a clergyman reads prayers in the Chapel, catechises the children, and visits the sick, if they desire it. Every *Sunday* he reads prayers and preaches to the poor of the house; the Directors and Guardians thinking it as much their duty to provide them the means of passing their lives, whilst they are here, in a decent religious manner, as to furnish them with subsistence. The children are taught to read, and instructed in the principles of religion; and for that good purpose sufficient time is allow'd them."

As to *behaviour*, he informs us, that "no *indecentcy of language or behaviour* is suffer'd; nor any strong or spirituous liquors, that fatal source of vice and immorality, permitted in the house."

Under these prudent regulations, carefully superintended by all the gentlemen and clergy within the district, he says, "we may reasonably expect to see these houses scenes of health, cleanliness, comfort, cheerfulness, industry, good order, and good morals. And such indeed we find them: the more inquisitive and curious the observer is, the more will he find to approve. At *Bulcamp*, and perhaps in all these houses, is an order that does honour to the liberal and ingenuous spirit of the directors, "That at all times in the Committee-Room, a book shall lie open, "with pen and ink near it, that in case any guardian, or other person "visiting the house occasionally, shall perceive any thing amiss, or can "suggest any new proposal for the better conducting this undertaking, "he may write his thoughts and observations therein, that the weekly "committee may consider the same, and report it to the next quarterly meeting, if they think proper."

He observes, that "in the *construction of any future house*, it may be thought eligible to make the windows larger, the rooms loftier, and the bed-chambers agreeable to the plan of the apartments for the married persons."

This gentleman then answers the objections made, observing, "that as no human institution can be perfect, so it is generally the fate of those, that come nearest to perfection, to be most objected to. To these

it has been objected, that as large and populous towns are more vicious and profligate than small villages, so the profligate and debauched of a large district, collected together in the same house, are more likely, by their conversation and example, to corrupt the morals of the youth confined in the same house, than any examples the same youth could possibly meet with in their different cottages."—He doubts whether *large and populous towns* are proportionably more vicious than the villages; observing, that "in the former there is a much higher sense of decency and religion; and That, one would hope, must have an happy influence on their morals." He acknowledges, that "the voice of riot is more often heard in their streets; but the gloomy rustic can skulk to his alehouse, and murder his time, his money, and his health in unsocial drunkenness. The village, I fear," says he, "has adopted the vices of the town; and retains its own; the clown, the churl, and other terms of opprobrious import, are translated *from* the country."

Waving this discussion, he observes, that "the disabled and the aged are collected together in these houses, not the profligate and debauched; these are left to the civil magistrate, and the laws: if haply any of these are at any time here, they are put in apartments where the children never come, and their behaviour is carefully adverted to. The children are mostly taken from the *Parish-houses*, those filthy nurseries of shameless and abandoned vice; where they see more corrupt examples than in any other place. Here the *males* and *females* of every age are separately lodg'd; hence they acquire a sense of decency: some grave and sober persons, their masters and governing matrons, are ever with them, to restrain the wantonness of youth; and the fear of God is diligently inculcated on their tender minds."

It is objected, that in these houses the children are brought up too tenderly, fitted for sedentary trades, but rendered incapable of undergoing the cold and fatigues of laborious husbandry and active life. To this he answers: "The comparison can only lie between these children, and those taken from the *parish-houses*." He then gives us his observation of such *parish* houses in the country, by saying, that "for want of necessary food and covering, the children are emaciated, enfeebled, dispirited,

dispirited, and unfit for any work: for want of instruction they are ignorant of all goodness; and the evil practices, in which they are early initiated, harden them to vice: the honest farmer knows this, and scruples to admit them into his family." He then makes the contrast, "The children of these houses are well fed, lively, and strong. If you plant, would you take your trees from the bleak and barren waste, or from the sheltered nursery? Their hours of play, in which they are obliged to be abroad, and their casual employment in the garden and fields belonging to the house, inure them to the air, and render them fit for the labours of husbandry. The children in hospitals are brought up, nearly on the same plan; yet are they not thought too delicate even for the service of the navy: their present education is only for a few years, and to habituate them to *industry*, till they can be ushered into the world."

He acknowledges, "the children of the laborious cottager, accustomed from their infancy to the open fields and the objects of their future employment, are *best trained for works of husbandry*; and this makes it desirable that these houses should have larger portions of land to occupy, that the more strong, hardy, and active of the boys might be more employ'd in rural labour."

In regard to this last remark, my ideas harmonize with his in the strongest manner. I have quoted very copiously, not with any partiality to such *houses*, hospitals, or any place where numbers are congregated, beyond what necessity absolutely requires; but chiefly with a view to the comparative excellency of the *country* beyond the *town*; and good management under gentlemen, not diverted by a thousand vain amusements, compared with the *devotees* to dissipation; and the horrible devastation created by *city idleness*.

Upon the great articles of room, space, air, industry, piety, and even life itself, the county house of industry at *Bulcamp*, I observe, cost £.10,000; it contains 340 persons; all accommodated in the manner related—The workhouse of my own parish, which is like most others, *contains*, or rather receives, as far as 360 persons: this cost less than

than £3,000. Now, my dear Sir, judge if the expenditure of £10,000 in the country, where building is so cheap, and £3,000 where it is so dear, may not afford every *pauper* there, five times the room as these poor *city paupers*, exclusive of the advantage of walking out. And what is the consequence? *Health, labour*, and it may be presumed *virtue, justice* and *mercy*, may thus be found in the *country*: *Sickness, idleness*, and *vice*, are the probable effects of false economy in town. A workhouse in town, where there is neither space for health nor labour, must tend to destruction.

You may easily form to yourself an idea of the effects of associating innocent children with adults, of whom so many are vicious and profligate; and some hardly in their right minds. In the same manner the distressed widow and orphan, whose life and manners call for tears of commiseration for the severity of their fortune: many of these claim only a temporary relief, till their relations and friends are acquainted with the condition they are in: Being brought to a workhouse they are generally exposed to the same inconveniences as the most worthless person. I had however, great pleasure lately on occasion of visiting the workhouse of *St. Martin's in the Fields*, in seeing one apartment filled with very decent women, who I presume were come to decay, working with their needle on fine linen, taken-in as work to be paid for, towards the support of the workhouse. In another room was a number of little girls, making caul for wigs: their appearance also did honour to humanity. The distinctions of the quality of unfortunate persons above the *labouring poor*, must ever interest the heart! Farewell.

LETTER

L E T T E R XVI

THIS general remark must be allowed: The nobility and gentry of this kingdom, where the poor's law constitutes so considerable a part of our police, have in process of time fallen off, and compared with the custom of antient times, totally neglected the poor. The reason of this is obvious; they suppose the indigent are amply provided for by means of the *parochial tax*; but they do not consider that the administration of this kind of justice, and the proper expenditure of such tax, is as essential a duty as the paying of it. In the mean while the increase of wealth has opened the portals of amusement so very wide, both in town and country, every hour may be filled up in a round of dissipation. At length there is some reason to hope they will grow tired of the vanity of such pursuits, carried to such an excess, and vary their object. Many, at least in the country, begin to consider what satisfaction they may derive from entering into the concerns of the poor; by endeavouring to make the parochial taxes produce the happy effects for which they were intended. Frequent occasions point out That which dignifies human nature, and expresses the most cordial *patriotism*. Religion co-operates, and the grand object of life, *immortality*, turns the balance, and influences many whose hearts are not estranged from the great truths contained in the New Testament, to act with consistency. Hence we find them forming themselves into societies for the better government of the *indigent*: and whilst these constitute so large a portion of mankind, in all ages, and in all countries, the office must be honourable: in spite of the depravity of the heart, or the tyranny of custom, it must afford a solid satisfaction.

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The county houses of industry, so warmly recommended by the ingenious author of the pamphlet which I have quoted, is a proof of what I advance. When this kind of humanity has had its reign, it will be a higher degree of improvement in moral excellency; for men of fortune and sentiment, in conjunction with the *clergy*, to take care of the indigent in the ordinary method of domestic life; that the virtues of filial duty may be more exercised; fraternal love be less a stranger to the hearts of the labouring poor; and maternal tenderness operate as the God of Nature intended it should do. It would be romantic to expect the golden age to be so far restored, that no misery should be found among *infants, aged, sickly, maimed, or insane* persons, without seeking succour, by availing ourselves of such asylums, as the houses of industry now in question so amply supply. The happy regulation of them, especially if they extend to vagrants, without refining on their possible evil consequences, deserves the attention of the ablest politician. In whatever we are defective, in these vast cities, which are so much the *fairs of vanity*, we may learn from country gentlemen, without any great mortification to our pride. Indeed we have but few country gentlemen who are not town gentlemen also: but the *field*, which the country affords, is so vastly superior to the town, for *space, air, occupation and health*; if a true principle were adopted, *all paupers* would be removed into the country, where the same work may be carried on within doors as in town; whilst the culture of the earth, the common parent of us all, might by the hands of *paupers*, contribute towards the furnishing of food as well as raiment. He who should produce a bushel of turnips, might deserve as much as he who has two pair of stockings knit by his own hand.

This general argument may suffice to remove those objections which are urged against the *county houses of industry*, and to give them a preference to the *workhouses* of the respective parishes in the county. According to the gradations of moral improvements among the nobility and gentry, this practice of taking care of *paupers*, will bend their thoughts to the indigent in general, till by precept and example, benevolence and charity, they shall establish a more consistent conduct in their respective

tive towns and villages: and thus they will check the growth of that immorality, which at this time wears so formidable an aspect.

Before we proceed to the proposal of any resolutions, with regard to the remedy of evils in these cities in particular, let us hear the evidence of the worthy author, with regard to what is passing in the kingdom in general. We usually take the *lead*, but we have often occasion to *follow*: and those who have the most leisure, may have the best ability to teach us. In tracing the sentiments and observations of the ingenious country clergyman, who mixes the *gentleman* and the *man of feeling* with his sacerdotal duty, we find many reflections and informations of importance to our subject. In his capacity as a *moralist*, he chastises us for our ingratitude to Heaven! He says,

“Whilst we are rolling thro’ the kingdom in our post-coaches, post-chaises, chairs, whiskies, and a variety of whirligigs of a whimsical construction, the high culture of our lands gives us the idea of a *Ferme bien ornée*; our nobility live in *palaces*, our gentry in *villas*, commerce has made us a nation of *gentry*, every farm-house is a *grange*, and the whole is one delightful scene of convenience, plenty, elegance, splendor, and magnificence. Mean time our *interior police* is disgrac’d with the number of our starving, naked, unshelter’d, miserable poor; this is an ulcer in our vitals, that spreads, and rankles, and diffuses its corruption thro’ every part; some remedy, some timely remedy is necessary!” The *evil*, for so we must call it, he adds, “hath long been observ’d, and engag’d the attention of very able men, who have propos’d their several plans of regulation to the public. The first was the great and good Lord Chief Justice *Hale*. The strong and comprehensive genius of Sir *Josiah Child* form’d a bolder and a larger scheme: these have been follow’d by Dr. *Davenant*, Mr. *Hay*, Lord *Hillsborough*, Sir *Richard Lloyd*, Mr. *Fielding*, Dr. *Burns*, and many other writers of great sensibility, and penetration. These have all look’d up to Sir *Matthew Hale* as their great pattern, except Mr. *Gee*, who computed the poor at a *million*, and upon that supposition was for sending them to the colonies; but whether his bad policy or his inhumanity is most to be execrated, may be a question. None of these plans have been adopted; and the Legislature

gildature hath gone on from time to time making fresh provisions, till
 "the laws concerning the poor," as Dr. Burn complains, "may not
 "improperly be compar'd to their apparel. Where a flaw is observed,
 "a patch is provided for it. Upon that another. And so on, till the
 "original coat is lost amidst a variety of patch-work. And more la-
 "bour and materials are expended (besides the clumsiness and motley
 "figure) than would have made an entire new suit."

Our author observes, that no society can subsist without some restraint;
 and speaking of the *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* houses of industry, informs us,
 "no restraint is there established, but what is necessary to good
 order. — The old sailors in *Greenwich Hospital*, the maimed veteran
 at *Chelsea*, the children in *Christ's*, and the *Foundling-Hospitals*, are all,
 and must be, under restraint and rule. The inhabitants of these hou-
 ses are children, or infirm and aged persons: that children ought to be
 under a proper restraint is acknowledged; here they are allowed two
 hours in the day for play; and more, when their industry deserves it. —
 Infirmary and age are of themselves a confinement; but such as are able
 to walk out are never denied a proper liberty. The governor (a) is not
 constituted the judge of such propriety, but the weekly Committee."

As to letting out paupers to be maintained by contract, it is, with some
 exceptions, a barbarous practice. "The statute which empowers the
 overseer to cram them into a narrow, nasty workhouse, and to contract
 with any person to lodge, keep, and maintain them, is often abused.
 The fund of such house is not sufficient to redeem them from their filthy
 rags; nor the capacity of it to furnish them with convenient, decent,
 and distinct apartments. The young, the old, the virtuous, the profligate,
 the sick, the healthy, the clean, the unclean, are huddled toge-
 ther, and inhaling a stagnated and putrid air, deplore their miserable
 situation: this receives the higher aggravation from their irremediable
 servitude to the contractor, some low-born, selfish, surly ruffian, from
 whose sordid tyranny there is no appeal, no redress, till the unhappy
 sufferers repose in the grave."

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(a) I presume he alludes to the chief residing officer so called.

This is a striking description of this gentleman's abhorrence of contracting out the poor, which is sometimes done in *London*; but where the *contractor* is well paid, as in the case of a number of small parishes within the walls of *London*, he finds it his interest to act with humanity: the poor here will not bear severity. — The author in question wishes the Directors of these *houses of industry*, should not be "vested with the power of farming out their poor, but that a preventive clause should be inserted in every future bill, were it only to vindicate the integrity of their intentions, and to satisfy the public!" adding, that "on the same principle it were to be wished the clause, which empowers them to contract with any person for employing all the poor within the house, were omitted; and That also, whereby they may bind the children apprentices to the *Governor* of the house; one end of the institution being to make such children useful to the *community* as soon as may be; and such unnecessary detention, tho' it has nothing oppressive in it, little answering that salutary purpose."

He then takes up again the consideration of *aged paupers*, by observing, "it may sometimes happen that the honest, industrious cottager, now incapable of labour and reduced to ask for support, by a long continued residence, an association of ideas, a partial affection to one particular spot, is wedded to his little habitation; to divorce him from it would be *cruel*: he raised That *bedge*; he planted That *tree*: some unaccountable attachment hangs upon his mind; in the churchyard of his village lies his wife, a son, or a darling daughter. All this is ideal: but many of our acutest pains and sublimest pleasures exist only in idea. It is a prejudice: but it is founded in human nature; and from this prejudice the noblest of our passions, *the love of our country*, arises. Might not this rural veteran be favoured with a little relief in his favorite cottage? It cannot be expected that the *act* can provide for *his case*; but the Guardians and Directors can; they are his neighbours; they know him and his merit; he never can want some friendly voice to plead his cause; the circumstance will seldom happen; an indulgence to it can be attended with no ill consequence; he surely

will

will not be refused; the philanthropy of an English gentleman cannot reject his request.

This reasoning is very fair, both with regard to the gentleman, and the respect due to the hoary locks of a virtuous rural veteran: but in order to secure such persons from the claim in question, it might be proper to consider, by what kind of bye-law, or resolution of the Governors and Directors, exceptions to their general rules may be adopted, describing under what circumstances, the remonstrance or petition of the party shall be attended to, in order to avoid the appearance of a tyrannical government of the poor.

The author then proceeds to obviate the objections made, as deducible from the repugnance which was shewn by the *paupers* themselves, when these houses of industry were first established. He says, "The causes of this are various. Some are grown old in profligacy and licentiousness: these hate to be reformed, and would not be controuled. Ignorance, and a distrust of their future situation, mixed with something of delicacy, operate on many. An abject groveling sordidness of mind, binds some to their present filthy hovels. Many have known; all have heard of the horrid practices of workhouses; and they have been taught, to look upon this house as a workhouse on a larger scale, and more severe; hence their minds are terrified with apprehensions of imprisonment, and corporal punishments."

"We know," says he, "the clamour, confusion, and riots, which were raised against the building of the house at *Bulcamp*: we know too that the experience of eight years has conquered all their prejudices, and that they are now as fond of the house, as they were averse to it before." This he acknowledges may be carried too far; observing, that "prudence directs us to cultivate in the lowest minds, a conscious sense of the superiority of honest industry, and a repugnance to any dependence, but on the labour of their own hands."

He refers these considerations to the gentlemen of *Norfolk*, where this humane spirit is now awake; and where other *Hundreds* wait

with earnest impatience for the reception which the petition of the Hundreds of *Mitford* and *Launditch* shall meet with in parliament; but they equally concern all the gentlemen of *England*; for, tho' each house of industry operates in its little district, it is to the general institution of them throughout the kingdom, we are to look up for an abolition of one evil that has disgraced our civil police from the earliest antiquity to the present hour, I mean that of *vagrant mendicancy*."

This is an evil with which our *London* streets abound, and it is obvious that penal laws alone are not adequate to it. There must be retreats from misery: Places where vagrants may be sent for relief, but where they should labour. He observes, "our ancestors were deficient in humanity; imprisonment in the stocks for three days and three nights, and there to have none other sustenance but bread and water, bloody scourgings, pillories, amputation of ears: these were the punishments of old inflicted on *vagrants*; but they were tender mercies to the cruelty of *Edw. VI. c. 3*. The reader, who is not acquainted with that statute, will be struck with astonishment at the perusal of it. The preamble well expresses *idleness* and *vagabondrie*, their *mischievous effects*, and the inefficacy of former laws to repress them; then the vagabond is described as one that does not offer himself to labour with any man that will take him to work, though only for meat and drink; or after being so taken to work shall leave it, or run away from such master; then such master, or any other person, espying the same, shall bring him to two of the next Justices of the Peace, there residing or abiding, who upon proof or confession of the party, shall immediately cause the same *loiterer* to be marked with a *hot-iron* in the breast, the marke of V. and adjudge him to such presentour to bee his slave for the space of two yeeres; who, only giving the said slave bread and water, or small drinke, and such refuse of meate as he shall thinke meete, shall cause him to worke by beating, cheining, or otherwise, in such worke and labour (how vile soever it be) as he shall put him unto. And if such slave shall runne away, his master shall pursue and fetch him back, and punish such faulte by cheines or beating; and proving such offence before two Justices, they shall cause such slave or loiterer to bee marked on the forehead, or the ball of the cheek, with an hot iron, with the signe of an S. that

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he may be knowne for a loiterer and a run away, and shall adjudge the loiterer and run away to be the said master's slave for ever. If hee runne away the second time; such faulte shall be adjudged felonie, and such runne-away being lawfully indited and atteinted, or otherwise, be condemned to suffer paines of death, as other felons ought to doe."

Those were days of tyranny, and the punishment too severe for the crime; but it shews the spirit of resentment, at the conduct of strolling idle beggars. "*Elizabeth* ordered that vagabonds be grievously whipped, and burned thro' the gristle of the right ear with a hot iron of the compass of an inch, unless some credible person will take him into service for a year. If he after do again fall into a *roguish* life, he shall suffer death as a felon, unless some credible person will take him into service for two years. And if he fall a third time into a roguish life, he shall be adjudged a *felon*."

"These," he observes, "are acts of ferocity that would shock an Horde of Savages. The gentler spirit of modern times has softened these rigors; whipping, confinement in the House of Correction till the next sessions; then a removal to the place of their settlement, is their punishment as by the present laws; even this is too severe, and therefore but seldom executed:—As this wretched class of people are not considered as objects of political care, they are suffered to wander at large, and levy their contributions with impunity. Some of them are driven out by the inattention or obduracy of the Parish Officer to beg a precarious subsistence from door to door. Many, and I fear the greatest part, are what our old laws deemed them, valiant and sturdy beggars, wretches that prefer a fordid idleness to honest labour."

Upon this we may observe, that our complaints are as general as our neglect of the means of preventing the evil. Some being real travellers impoverished by sickness, or other accidents; others, driven out of their parish, by the inhuman conduct of parish officers, are constrained for the present to beg for bread. In the various events of life, some acts of misconduct are pardonable, some pitiable.—"When the miserable object implores our charity in the streets, or fixes himself a breathing statue

of misery at our doors, we cannot always distinguish the *fictitious* from the *real* distress; not to relieve is unkindness enough; to punish with *whipping*, or *confinement* in the doleful prison-house, policy may dictate, but humanity rebels; and religion inspires us in the midst of judgment to remember mercy."

He goes on to observe, that "one *preventive* law is wiser and more effectual than twenty which are penal. Were *houses of industry* universally established, and open for the reception of vagrants, where they are not subjected to any cruel or injurious treatment, where simple confinement from their lawless courses, and a moderate employment in social and reputable labour is their only punishment, many would thankfully accept a shelter in this hospitable asylum, and become useful members the community."

This gentleman goes further; and I agree with him entirely, that "to *compel vagrants* to come in, would be an act of real charity. But if the gentleness of the government, and the blessings that await them here, cannot correct their judgments and convince them of their welfare; if their laziness is incorrigible, or their ferociousness not to be subdued, they must be consigned over to severer laws, that the kingdom may be delivered from the most disgraceful, profligate, and mischievous of its people."—These are his opinions nearly in his own words, and you will shew them all the attention they deserve. There can be no foundation for doubt, that so long as these *houses of industry* are attended and conducted by men of zeal and sentiment, they will be superior to *common parish workhouses*; and produce all the happy effects that can be reasonably wished for, or desired. *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R XVII.

THE lenient spirit of our *laws*, at this period of time, and of our *practice* with respect to *stray* people and vagabonds, not guilty of actual felony, are clearly delineated in the act of 14 of his present Majesty, *for the better relief and employment of the poor of St. Leonard Shoreditch, &c.* page 717; in which we find the following clause:

“And whereas divers children deserted by their parents are frequently found wandering and begging in the said parish, and not able to give an account of themselves, or the place of their legal settlement; and whereas if such children were properly employed, and inured to a habit of industry, they might be furnished with means for their future maintenance, and instead of a nuisance, be rendered useful to the public: and whereas divers other persons are found wandering and begging in the said parish, and daily committing acts of vagrancy, and misbehaving themselves; and if power were given to apprehend such persons, and send them to such workhouse, there to be dealt with in manner as aforesaid, it would tend to inure them to a habit of industry, and make them useful to the public; be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the churchwardens, overseers of the poor, and the said trustees, or any five or more of them, to cause such child or children as he or they shall judge to be under the age of fourteen years, who shall be found wandering and begging in the said parish, if they think proper, to be taken, and to send them to the workhouse belonging to the said parish, there to be detained and employed until he or she shall attain, or in case his or her age cannot be ascertained, till he or she shall be adjudged

adjudged to have attained the age of *twenty-one years*, or *day of marriage*, if a female, or be discharged by due course of law; and it shall and also may be lawful to and for the said churchwardens, overseers of the poor, and trustees, or any five or more of them, to cause such other person or persons as shall be found wandering and begging or misbehaving themselves in the said parish, if they think proper, to be sent to the said workhouse, there to be kept to work for so long time as the said churchwardens, overseers, and trustees, or any five of them, shall think proper, or until they shall be discharged by due course of law: and in case of any misbehaviour of any such persons, so sent as aforesaid, it shall and may be lawful to correct and otherwise punish such offenders in manner as before mentioned."

The punishments to be inflicted by this act (a), are, in general, such as most other acts contain. The officers may take up any person they think proper, being offensive to them: and the terror of this may frighten away many beggars,—till they see how this power is executed.

With regard to the punishments to be inflicted, in the house, if proper cells were built at a proper distance from the other apartments, where solitude and bread and water should be their lot, till they became humble and industrious, it might reduce the stubborn and profligate: but where this proves ineffectual, in that case, application should

(a) "And whereas many persons maintained in public workhouses refuse to work, or are guilty of profane cursing and swearing, or other misbehaviour, and by the laws now in being no punishment can be inflicted on them, without committing them to the house of correction, or county gaol; which commitments have been found not to answer the purposes thereby intended; Be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if any person or persons who shall be maintained in the workhouse or workhouses of the said parish, shall refuse to work, or be guilty of profane cursing and swearing, or otherwise misbehave him or herself, that then, and in such case, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said trustees, or any five or more of them, to cause such person or persons, so offending, to be punished in such workhouse, either by moderate correction, confinement, distinguishing them in dress, diet, or such other method as may best tend to remedy such offences for the future, without committing such offender to the house of correction, or other prison; any law, statute, or usage to the contrary notwithstanding."

should be made to the magistrate to commit them to a prison; not to associate with others, but to solitary cells appointed for the purpose, till such time as by reflection, good advice, and the disuse of intoxicating liquors, they should be brought to their senses, and repent.

With regard to the great objects in question, namely, the suppression of the spirit of vagrancy, and preventing such scenes of misery in our streets; what can we conclude from the bill, however well intentioned by the present officers, but that it will have the fortune of almost every other? Can it be supposed this parish will seek to charge itself with more than its portion of the miserable, idle, and profligate persons with which these cities abound? No: it only *may* or *can* apprehend such vagrants, when found in their own parish.

The great object of parish officers is to pass vagrants, and those who do not legally belong to them: To secure themselves by admitting none but *certificate* men; and to see such certificates executed, though with the rigour of law.—The *passing* of any pauper, *without* the clearest evidence of his settlement, is generally attended with vexations and difficulties; and *with* it, the expences often run very high.

Nor does this act compel the parish to give certificates (*a*), let there be ever so great an overflowing of unnecessary hands; nor is there any encouragement to give them: if the cottages are pulled down, where are the people to live? The penurious jealousy of overseers has been so great, that I have known a man possessed of an income of near one hundred pounds *per annum*, of the rank of a gardener, though he had been for some time married, and had no children; yet he was importuned and vexed, till he had obtained a *certificate* from the parish he belonged to. I have also heard of a man, who *extorted* a weekly allowance, on the threat that he would marry in the parish, lest he should bring on it the charge of a family of *children*; whilst a *certificated* woman with child was removed, under circumstances of the greatest danger to her life. These *certificates* are no friends to liberty, X *humanity*,

(a) See page 118.

Unless the law respecting vagrants and common beggars can be humanity, or population, but often prove instruments of slavery: let them be general to all parishes, though they extend to a man's children when he is dead: they are now as fruitful a source of litigation, as any the prostituted parochial laws can yield; whilst the unnecessary removal of uncertificated persons, wears the face of cruelty.—The doctrine of settlements at large, though it often prevents misery by giving a title to relief, it occasions much trouble and vexation to the poor, as well as to those who have the conduct of them; especially in those cases, in which they might with very little countenance thrive in the place where they are, though they become a burthen in another. This object has been taken under very serious consideration; but how to remedy the disadvantageous part, without losing the beneficial effects, has been hitherto found impracticable.

Let the expelled vagrant, or more wretched poor child, be bandied from one parish to another; the settlement is often disputed; it may be very remote; the child may be used to begging, and long to return to the same course. Many instances there are of such persons strolling back to this great town, from hundreds of miles distant, as if beggary were one of the most profitable occupations. If due precautions are not taken, it is more than probable he will escape: and what is a yet more unhappy circumstance, the parish officers, to whom he is sent, will be glad to get quit of the incumbrance. Thus we kick against the pricks: But granting the young orphan can be held; what is this to the purpose of adult mendicants, of whom we find so many thousands? We look down with indignation on the hooded friar, in popish countries, who comes with a paltry bit of wood, cut into a human form, which he calls the *blessed virgin*; and makes the image the instrument of extorting from the hard hand of peasants, the bread that is to nourish them; at the very moment that we subject ourselves to ten times more tricks and contrivances, than all the pious frauds that ever were invented to extort charity, in support of idleness.

Unless

Unless the law respecting vagrants and common beggars can be rendered universal over the kingdom, what will any partial act avail? It must be inadequate to the calamity under which we labour.

Let the parish where any person is found begging, be subject to a fine, to be levied by a very summary process, if upon information given by any housekeeper, the beggar is not immediately apprehended: This would compel him to give up his infamous trade. In this case, the relief proposed, should extend to the *blind* and the *lame*: let the *blind* be so disposed of afterwards, that no one parish shall be charged beyond a certain proportion of such persons: If these should become pensioners for life, it is no more than many of the *aged* are. Let there be a proper officer in pay, in every parish in *England*, subject to the churchwardens, overseers, and trustees of parishes, under some new title; instead of *beadle*, suppose we call him the *poor's friend*, to whom application may be made; or in *his absence*, to one of the churchwardens or overseers. The information should be given in writing, viz. that he or she (the person giving the alms) at such a place, at such a time, such a person (describing the person) asking charity, he (or she) gave so much money. If any other person than he or she who gave the money, makes the information, being any time after two days, the party being summoned before the justice of the peace, and the informer satisfying the justice of the fact, then to be entitled to twenty shillings, to be levied on the person giving; and in default of payment, to be subject to imprisonment. Where, and of what kind the imprisonment should be, must be well considered. Offenders against law, however charitable, are still offenders. Under such circumstances, I apprehend the beggar will derive but a slender support from following his trade.

To say that no one shall give any thing to the relief of misery, would be absurd: we may say they shall not give in defiance of the laws, without suffering the penalty. With such a rod over us, could the beggar be long maintained in his mendicancy? If those who relieved him were subject to a fine, if they did not give information to the proper officer, in order to the beggar's being apprehended, it could scarce fail of success. And whether the parties themselves inform, or are

informed against, the execution of such a law, in a very few instances, would check the *dangerous spirit of unguarded benevolence to common beggars*. Such a law, well digested, might accomplish the work: but it would be in vain to attempt it; and equally cruel to apprehend vagrants or beggars, without a proper place to send them to, within a reasonable distance; or without the wretched knowing where to apply for relief. Necessity will trample upon law founded upon inhumanity; and the legal plea to levy the twenty shillings, would be deemed a cruelty; but when effectual relief is intended to be given to the beggar, it would then appear merciful. The *impostor* being distinguished from others, would still be treated with the proper legal rigour.

But supposing the *county house of industry*, or the parish houses in these cities, to be full, according to the limitation of their numbers to be received, what is to be done then with the vagrant?—The next adjoining house of industry, or parish, should be subject to receive him. The abilities of two or three such houses, might extend to such reception; for it is evident that the number of beggars would gradually decrease. But if the *three houses are full*, then the parish where the vagrant was taken, should stand bound to hire the best and properest place for his confinement, till such time as there might be a vacancy, the officers yielding to *no difficulty* whatsoever to carry the point in question.

In the mean while, the indigent of every kind having the rod held over them, would apply themselves diligently to avoid a removal from their home, to a situation of confinement, which can never be so pleasant as full liberty. The county house of industry, or the parish house, being strictly examined every quarter, some of the inhabitants would be found proper to turn out, to get their bread; others may be ripe for a prison-house of more severe temporary confinement. Between work and punishment, the task in question might be accomplished: and it would be soon discovered who would be first tired, the *lazy, perverse, and profligate*; or the proper officers charged with the execution of the law. To try the experiment, would be to conquer!

No regulation of this kind should be understood to stifle the feelings of the heart with regard to private distress. Some would beg, provided it be done in *private*, to prevent the violation of the law. Some might implore charity in secret, "for God's sake give me relief, that I may not be obliged to ask alms in the streets, nor be under a necessity of applying to the parish officers, to send me to the house of industry." No law can totally prevent the miseries to which human life is subject, nor restrain the humanity of individuals. The tear of distress on one side, and the compassion of the heart on the other, will still be exercised: but the first must not be exposed to the public eye; and the last will not proclaim itself on the house top. Still the terms and conditions of the law, might be maintained.

To keep parishioners in mind, the clause of the act should be required to be read in the churches, by the vicar, rector, or curate; they being directed by the bishop of the diocese to exhort their congregation to express their humanity, by a compliance with the conditions of the law, as the only expedient to prevent the mischievous effects of idleness and penury. This should be done, for the first year, every three months, and afterwards every six months, in the nature of a charity-sermon, founded upon the duty of promoting universal industry, cleanliness, frugality, piety, and the hopes of the blessings which attend on a virtuous life. Let the indigent and labouring poor, as well as the rich and affluent, see that government is in earnest, and a few years will do the business which ages have left unaccomplished.

An abstract of the nature, end, and design of the law, properly commented on, should be also placed up against church doors, and other places, where it would be read.

To say That cannot be done by us, in a constitutional manner, which is practised by other nations, would be saying, we must fall a sacrifice to the name of *liberty*, for want of the substance of it: but till we make a point of it, we shall go on complaining, from generation to generation. If we are profuse in idle and vain expences, and penurious in such a necessary and important duty: if each parish, and every individual,

individual, evades proposals, which will cost them a little more present money than they have usually spared for such purposes, whilst they are so superbly magnificent in luxurious improvements, what can be the event? If our hearts are absorbed in these gratifications, our police must droop and languish: we cannot be rendered a happy nation, notwithstanding all external appearances on the affluent side.

Laws have no passions; nor should the *law-makers* have any but for the *public good*. Time brings all things to maturity: the number of our *hospitals* and *infirmaries*, for every kind of human want and distress, almost in every place, prepares the way to ease the expence of such a *reformation* as this now proposed. We shall never see the virtues and comforts of domestic life reign in their full lustre, till the industry taught the present generation, shall make the next find the way to *live at home*, according to the true plan of social life. The young are certainly the most valuable part of the community in a political light; and in the general view of the existence of a nation, it may with propriety be said, that the glory of the world, like the rising sun, springs from the growing strength, beauty, and mental powers of the rising generation of the *labouring* part of mankind. These are the fountain from whence our affluence flows! We have seen many specimens of the contempt of laws, and a ferocious licentiousness, trampling upon good order and national liberty: we have the mortification to behold religion lose the greatest part of its influence on the minds of the common people: whatever we can do to call them back, will of course operate to render idleness, whoredom, drunkenness, lying, swearing, pilfering, and such like, so much the more infamous. So long as there is vice and folly in the world, they will be attended with *accidents*, *misfortunes*, and *miseries*: as whatever promises good, by the force and exercise of reason, according to the ordinary events of human life, must be considered as the principle on which intelligent and accountable beings seek for happiness.

The work in question may be deemed an *Herculean* labour; yet not impracticable without a miracle: the more difficult, the more honourable it will be! It is most worthy the *cost*, the *time*, the *trouble* it will create:

create: and it must be done, if we mean to correct the enormities which abound, and establish such industrious pursuits, as will alone give the indigent a true relish of domestic comforts; or free our children, and generations to come, from the burthen of the poor-rates, rendered the more grievous to the heart, as not answering the purposes intended by the law, or gratifying the yearnings of humanity. Root up all the weeds of common beggars; make it infamous to ask for money, not earned by labour; and in process of time, every one will depend on his own industry and virtue for his happiness; and in general we may behold the principle we adopt substantiated; *that it is far better to give a poor man something for doing something, be it what it may, than for being idle, and learning to do mischief.* In every view, let the first resolution be, speaking as men, and submitting to the sovereign Disposer of all events, that *we will conquer!*

It seems evident, that an adherence only to the doctrine of parochial settlements, is ineffectual: its powers are incompetent; the execution of it pregnant with infinite litigations, and vexatious difficulties. We have been attempting to fill a cask, perforated with a thousand holes, with water: Our work never will be accomplished by this mode: we must avail ourselves of a more general plan, and a stricter discipline. If the people were to spend a million or two of money in proper houses of industry for the *poor*, and as much in prisons for the *wicked*, adapted to the great ends in view; and exercise the penalties which might be required, in the execution of the laws, humanly speaking we could not fail of obtaining the end of our wishes. If we never use the *means*, let us write and talk, and make laws, till we become grey in fruitless efforts, and even the love of life grows languid, it will not avail: we shall never attain the end.

We spare no expence in fighting against an enemy for very remote and uncertain objects: and yet revolt against the most obvious and necessary good, in which we are so very intimately concerned. This may not cost, at the very utmost, three or four in the hundred of the expence of the last war. The grand expence proposed is but for *once*: wars may happen every *ten* or *twenty* years; let us learn *economy* in

peace, that we may practise it in war; and by increasing the numbers of our people, brighten our prospect of success. Do we now act like a great and powerful nation? Do we support the character of a wise, humane, commercial people, influenced by motives of civil and religious liberty? If we do *not*, let the true objects of our temporal and eternal felicity be brought in full view before us: we are not become so puerile, that these do not influence our understandings, nor so improvidently ignorant, but when we come to compute the cost we are now at for the poor, and likely to be at from generation to generation, we shall chuse the lesser expence, upon the whole. For so great and good a purpose, we must avail ourselves of the energy of government, and exert it! *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R XVIII.

IN our enquiries what rule of conduct is best calculated to administer to the moral and political welfare of those whom Providence has placed in a condition inferior to our own, we generally adopt some particular system; though custom varies in a great degree according to the prevailing dispositions of the inhabitants of different parts of the kingdom. With regard to the parochial poor, the laws vary, as particular acts of parliament have been obtained. As to the propriety of congregating the poor, of many parishes, in *county houses of industry*, it must be either for the benefit, or injury of the poor; the consideration is therefore an object of importance. In these days of dissipation, it is more easy for governors to visit and manage one house, the distance from them being considerable, than to divide the same attention among many houses, nearer at hand; it therefore seems to follow, that men of liberal minds, and enlarged educations, may be induced to take this charge. Granting that a small body of people is more like a private family, and sober domestic life, than the noise, flutter, and unavoidable parade of a great community; yet it is an object better suited to the care of gentlemen of fortune. If we mean that strict justice shall be done, or mercy shewn the poor, in no case ought men of illiberal sentiments to be judges, jury, and executioners of the laws.

The ingenious author, to whom I have referred you, speaking of the maintenance of the poor, acknowledges, that "the first wish of humanity is, that every man may be enabled by his industry and frugality, to procure a decent and comfortable subsistence for himself and his family: but as this cannot always be, the next is, that every one may have a de-

cent and comfortable subsistence provided for him: this is effectually done by the *houses of industry* within their respective districts."

In the consideration of the *morals* of the poor, he observes, that "the first thing which strikes us is their insolence, and licentiousness; their indecent contempt of subordination; their dissipation, and profligacy abroad; their ignorance, irreligion, insensibility, and sordid misery in their houses. Before we think of *happiness* for them, we must find a remedy for these evils; nor can this be applied with any hopes of success, till we have found the cause of them. This was once ascribed to *gin*; which has been in a great measure suppressed, yet the evil remains. Next, the *alehouse* has been represented as "the infernal mansion, where "the demons of avarice, extravagance, fury, and prophaneness hold their "perpetual residence; and whence the demons of famine and disease "issue, like a strong man armed, to desolate the cottages of the ham- "let, or the streets of the city." (a) This is a melancholy truth; but it is a consequence, rather than a cause: the matter must be traced deeper."—Upon this I observe, that the evil lies in a great measure, on our revenue depending so much on the vice and folly of the people; when they would be more able to pay taxes, and have fewer taxes to pay, if they were frugal and temperate.

Our author says, "In the first place, the laws themselves are made an occasion of the evils we complain of. If any unhappy female, whose passions are too strong for her reason and her virtue, once suffers her loose desires to get dominion, she is totally and irretrievably undone. With an allowance of *eighteen-pence a week to maintain herself and child*, abandoned to infamy and want, she becomes desperate and profligate, and now makes a trade of that vice, which at first was a pitiable weakness. This awakes the overseer to interpose his *charitable* offices; an *husband* must be provided for her, no matter who, so that his settlement be in *another parish*; and she becomes the bride of some miserable object of her disgust and aversion, who for a treat and a little money accepts the yielding fair, and leads her in triumph to his own mansion, where

(a) Observations on the present State of the parochial and vagrant Poor.

she becomes each year the fruitful mother of a *legitimate bastard*. The situation of the unhappy progeny of such infamous marriages needs not be described. The intelligent reader will observe that *houses of industry* hold out a remedy to this evil."

On this head I beg leave to observe, that the animal part of the *villagers* predominates so much, that the male and female often come together before marriage; and if the woman *proves*, as they term becoming pregnant, then the parties marry by a kind of law of honour and decency.—If the girl desires to be made, what they call an *honest woman*, that is a wife; if she cannot persuade her lover, she brings him before a justice of the peace, who upon the oath of the woman, demands of the putative father of the unborn child, security for the maintenance of it; and if he *cannot*, or *will* not give it, he is to be committed to prison. Many a young man cannot find proper security, nor can he digest the thoughts of a prison. If the justice performs his part as a friend to society, and an advocate for the great law of reciprocal equity, he represents to the young man his duty to God, and to the woman; regard to his own reputation, and the common welfare: he reminds him of what is often true, that he promis'd marriage to the complainant, whom he tempted to trespass. He represents the sad consequences of such lawless commerce, where marriage does not follow; and generally prevails on him to enter into the holy state of wedlock. These matches, in some places that I know of, are generally happy; the child is legitimized, and the offspring in general as strong and healthy, as any other. If the *parents* of the wedded persons, do their part, and the *minister* will shew a diligent attention to his office, the moral and religious conduct of this pair, towards their children, may be the same as if the priest had performed his office before they came together.

I do not in the least dispute the veracity of the reverend gentleman's detail. Much depends on the prevailing customs of particular counties or districts; for the indigent are ruled by fashion as well as the affluent; and he may produce as many instances of the misery he describes in his county, as I can of the sketch which I have given, in mine; and I fear as iniquity increases, the balance of the account will be in his favour.

The author proceeds to observe, that "the situation of the children of the Poor in general trained up in ignorance, nakedness, hunger, and filthiness, unprincipled in any school but that of laziness, pilfering, and vice, untinged with any sense of decency or religion, is terrible: their advancing years at length call them into the world; they carry with them the habits of their education, and whether servants, apprentices, or labourers, are idle, dishonest, and dissolute. They are however susceptible of the softer passions; they marry, and propagate their progeny, being often a disgrace, and frequently a burden to the community."

He still maintains his argument on the same ground, by saying, "if any of these, temper'd of nature's finest clay, and formed in her favourite mold, emerge from this sink of corruption, and by some happy circumstance becomes a servant in a reputable family, where he acquires ideas of decency, industry, frugality, and religion, what is the prospect before him?" The answer this gentleman gives is in these emphatical words: "One short sentence will express it, He must work, and he must starve." There is a severity in the expression of this sentence, tho' much *truth* in it; for, says he, "Every encouragement is taken away; every avenue to a more comfortable subsistence is choaked up. Our wiser forefathers left little cottages, and little portions of land annexed to them, as incitements to their servants, and rewards of their good conduct: to these, after their period of approved service, they were permitted to retire; they looked up to their master as their greatest benefactor; they enjoyed themselves with something of their own; their houses were happy scenes of domestic content, and little nurseries of a successive race of laborious, frugal, and honest servants. Our ruinous parsimony has demolished these cottages, and united their little precincts to the great farm, which now, like *Auron's* Rod, is become a Serpent, and has swallowed up all the rest, leaving humanity and good policy, as well as poetry, to lament *the deserted village* (a).

Our

(a) The late *Earl of Leicester*, being complimented upon the completion of his great design at *Holkham*, replied, "It is a melancholy thing to stand alone in ones country; look round;

"not

Our next view of this hopeful young man shows him enamoured of some village beauty: the favoured Fair has the fine features and delicate complexion of our lovely country women; they make an impression upon his heart; he marries, and enters the world with all the vivid ideas of love, heightened with the inexperience of a youthful imagination. The first year brings him a child; he is proud of it, exerts his industry with double vigor, and is yet happy. The next year brings him another child; the next another, and so on, till now he finds that the most unabated labour but ill supplies the necessities of his increasing family. By this time he has made another, and more cruel discovery; he finds that his wife is ignorant and improvident, a stranger to domestic economy, and unacquainted with the use of the needle; his children are ill fed, untaught, filthy, and in rags; he blames his wife's misconduct, and negligence; she recriminates; and the poor man wonders to find himself unhappy.—Hence he repairs to the Alehouse, and drinks oblivion to his cares; he there mingles with the dissolute and abandoned, by degrees becomes one of them, sinks from poverty and vice to lower degrees of both, till at length we find him and his distressed family in one of those wretched tenancies which the Overseer has legally provided for the miserable poor.”

This is a picture of a melancholy scene: but it resembles reality in so many instances, it may warrant the description. Extravagance in drinking is carried to such a height, that many who have families, and gain 18 or 20s. in a week, spend half of it at the alehouse. The houses of industry, under their present good management, are represented as effectual, as any such education can be, to provide against such events. The breaking connections by blood or affinity, by the removal of these objects, may be an evil in some cases, in others a good. The author adds, that “it is our interest to take care that the houses be not overburdened; and our duty to protect those honest and frugal families which support themselves independent of such houses. If this protection

“not an house is to be seen, but mine; I am Giant of Giant Castle, and have eat up all my neighbours!” The expression was strong, but it marked the strong sensibility of his heart. His Lordship intended to have peopled the country, but unhappily he died soon after.

tection can be administered to them without a public expence, and only with a little pleasing attention, it deserves to be adverted to."

By this last remark I suppose he means that the Governors and Directors of these *houses of industry*, from a habit of attention to the preservation of the *paupers* in the house, may learn to exercise the greater piety and humanity to the poor, who live by their labour, independent of the parochial charity; and altho' these make no demand for any part of the public parish money, it does not follow that their virtue may not claim the favour and attention of their opulent neighbours. The smiles of the squire, and the lord of the manor, and their wives, and daughters; towards whom can these be exercised, if not to the lowest classes of virtuous people, and those who stand most in need, to encourage them in virtue and religion, and render them steady in the pursuits of sober labour? It is evidently the neglect of these duties which occasions such numbers to be in want of the *parochial* assistance. The *houses of industry* already in being may have this good effect, that when they are full, every gentleman of fortune will watch the labouring poor of his neighbourhood, that their conduct be regular and consistent. These have this spur to industry, that they are not sure of a dinner if they do not earn it: they must rise early, and seek for labour abroad, as well as at home, and reap this advantage from their situation. When leisure admits, they may cultivate their little garden, spin, knit, sew; clean their cottage, and all its furniture, as well as their clothes; not forgetting the use of their *Bible*, and *Common prayer-book*. Thus the villager may ripen into comfortable age, and at length retire to rest with his fathers, in full and certain hope of as glorious an immortality, as the sons of princes have in prospect.

The author, who piously extends his religious and political care for the poor, beyond these houses of industry, observes, that in order to remedy the evils he complains of "there should be a *proper school* established in *every parish*, under the direction of well-qualified persons, to which all the poor of that parish should be obliged to send their children constantly. Much learning is not necessary; but they should be taught to read the *Bible*; they should be impressed with an early knowledge

ledge and veneration of God, as the Creator and Governor of the World; with a sense of their duty to him, as accountable to his laws; of his goodness in the redemption of the world; of the necessity of holiness to happiness; of the resurrection from the dead; of the day of judgment, and life everlasting." I presume he will add, the remembrance of the Great Author of our Salvation, so emphatically required by the Christian law; and render the same as familiar, as the doctrine of remembrance is essential to the name of a Christian. The restoration of such knowledge, which seems at present to be lost, among the common people, I apprehend to be the grand criterion to judge, whether they will act a consistent part, or not. The neglect of the sacrament of our *Lord's Supper*, is the strongest proof of their ignorance, and disinclination to religion; and without religion, how are we to expect that equality of mind, and consistency of conduct, which characterises intelligent and accountable beings? The author goes on to observe, "In this school all the females should be taught to *knit and sew*."—To this I would add *spinning and cookery*, of such a kind as would be most useful to them; the spinning to be learnt, as that which they may have occasion for, to get their bread; the *cookery*, as essential to life; and to make their bread go the further; distinguishing between devouring *luncheons of solid animal substance*, as our custom is, and making it contribute to give a relish to *water, roots, grain and pulse*; that they may be thus qualified at all points for domestic life, as daughters, wives, mothers and servants.—He adds, "Their earnings would soon pay for their teaching, and be moreover a comfortable assistance to their parents.—The *boys*, in like manner, under the direction of some sober man advanced in years, should during some hours each day be employed abroad; they might at proper seasons gather stones, pull up weeds, wield their little mattocks in the high-ways, or be engaged in any service suitable to their abilities, to train them up to industry; their earnings in like manner to pay for their teaching, and the overplus given to their parents.

—Every Sunday they should be obliged to attend their master or mistress to the church. It cannot be doubted but that every gentleman in each parish, every farmer of an humane and benevolent disposition, and particularly

particularly every clergyman, would with pleasure attend, encourage, and direct this little seminary of rural simplicity, and religious education.— From hence at a proper age they would be taken into service; by their being inured to industry, trained to obedience, and brought up in the faith and fear of God, all possible security would be given for their fidelity and good behaviour." He then proposes,

1. "At the age of 16 for the females, at 18 for the males, their wages should be limited at somewhat a less price than the farmer now gives, for a reason that will soon be mentioned.

2. If in their service any of them should be turbulent, unruly, and refractory to their master's commands, he should apply to the Directors and Guardians of the *house of industry* at their next weekly Committee, who upon proof of the complaint should take them into the House, and keep them there for the remaining part of That year.

3. If they behave well in their service, at the expiration of their year their master should give them a certificate of their good behaviour, or show cause before a magistrate why he refuses it.

4. When such persons marry, they should bear such certificates to the Churchwardens of the parishes in which they were granted, and be intitled to receive for each certificate a certain premium, suppose 15 or 20s. to be raised by rate upon such persons only in the parish as usually keep servants. *This would be no burden upon the farmer, as his share would be saved by the limitation of wages:* it would be a great encouragement to servants to behave faithfully and obediently; and would enable them to enter upon the married state with comfort and decency.

Here we find a generous graft upon this plantation, which may ripen into the most delicious fruit: But as it stands, methinks it is so luxuriant it will break down its branches. The *diminution of wages* of particular persons by law; *partial taxes* for the payment of the 20s; the efficacy of good by 20s; and *forcible detentions* of such persons; I doubt the *practicability* in these instances, as well as the *use*. I have further to observe,

observe, that probably such a school, were it only for teaching children to read and work, would require some pecuniary support, as there would be rents, books, pen, ink, and paper (if, perchance, a few of these scholars were taught to write) as well as the *salary* of an able *school-master* and *school-mistress*, to pay: Such wretched creatures as are generally put into these offices mangle their work horribly. The children should acquire an early habit of industry, but they could not go very far *a-field* for it; and when they reached to an age of gaining any thing considerable, their parents would naturally keep them to labour; so that no great dependence should be made on their gain at this school. The stipend for the master, should be regulated by the vestry, or at the quarter sessions: It should be paid out of the parish rates, as a tax essential to the welfare of the poor in general, comprehending all the *parishioners*, who would take the advantage of it.—The *irreligion* into which the common people have degenerated, is become such an abomination, one would imagine many of them had lost all sense of the immortality of the soul. To give them impressions of this should be the great object, however few the hours which they might be kept at school from their labour, when they become capable of gaining by it.

In order to promote useful industry, every such school should have a *garden ground*, divided into plats of a few square yards, for the cultivation of *roots*, *pulse*, and *grain*. The boys should alternately cultivate each such little spot; thus acquiring the strongest and most lively impressions of the productions of the earth, they would become gardeners and farmers at the age of ten or twelve years. This is not a romantic idea: we see how early the infant-mind receives impressions, and is eager after knowledge. The observation of each other's labour would strike no less with emulation, and they might learn, not only to distinguish grain of every kind, but also the differences of the same specie. *This idea, carried into the schools of young gentlemen, would be of great use to those born to inherit landed property.*

In these schools the *poor* boys might be also taught to knit and spin. Such seminaries of learning might be rendered of as high importance to the state, as those which prepare men for the first offices in it.

The worthy author who led me into this train of thinking, proceeds upon the foundation of industry, to inspire the nobility and gentry, with the virtue which regards the lives of the laborious poor, to their utmost period; by observing,

“ Here it is much to be wished that some encouragement might be continued to their virtuous conduct throughout their lives. *Encouragement* is the soul of industry; an industrious and frugal peasantry is the glory of the country; they deserve every reasonable favour that can be shown them. What then if the Gentleman, the humane, the benevolent Gentleman, the friend, the patron, the protector of this truly valuable class of men, should rebuild the demolished cottage, repeople the desolated village, and replace the faithful servant in the station our forefathers assigned his humble merit? That station was a decent dwelling, and the occupation of a few acres of land. The large occupier must have his constant labourers, besides his domestic servants; and to whom can he better assign That labour, than to the man who has been faithful and diligent in his house? Suppose then on every farm that employs a constant labourer, and so in proportion to such labourers employed, a little cottage were built, and a little portion of pasture land annexed to it.”

This reverend gentleman argues *against* the current notion of the times; whether this runs retrograde to our true interest, is the question. There are few questions which have not two faces, the one handsome; the other ugly. *Art* may *disguise* the first, and *deform* the last. We have made vast improvements in our lands, but our *poor's* rates increase: the indigent are not put in a comfortable condition: their moral conduct is neglected: *thievery*, and every kind of *immorality* abounds; and those on whom we depend for the produce of the earth, do not keep pace in their proper improvement with the soil that supports us. *All is not well!* The times are changed!—Changed much for the better in regard to the security of our civil rights, and equality of liberty: but the general enjoyment of *comfort*, which civilization is supposed to carry along with it, is hard to find. There reigns amongst us, a more than common propensity to evil.

This

This author informs us, that "the Cecils, the Walsinghams, of former times, assigned four acres at least, 31 Eliz. c. 7. as I understand, to each cottage." If these four acres were now changed to one under the best culture, wonders might be done! To an industrious man one acre might be worth £.8 or £.10 a year, as he would work on it at his leisure, or his wife and children would do the business.

The author then goes on, "Let us act constitutionally, and adhere to the genius of our laws. A little money would erect this building, and the rent pay ample interest for it. We have before endeavour'd to raise the honest occupier a small fund to enable him to stock this little farm: this cow, says he, is *my own*; there is more music in those two short words, than in all the notes of *Rossignole*. The wife attends to this little business, and the daughter is early initiated in the work of the dairy: at night the husband returns from his labour with pleasure; with pleasure he looks over his little domain; his children are come home from their school, he wonders at their improvement, and beholds them with transport; he feels no want; he finds every thing neat and comfortable around him, and becomes every day more temperate, more frugal, more industrious, to secure the continuance of the happiness he now enjoys."

This is a bright and shining consequence of the encouragement of virtuous industry. The author remarks, that "these ideas of benevolence, good order, and happiness, may be thought visionary, and even romantic, by many; but they are interesting to the heart, and give the mind a pleasure beyond that of the most refined voluptuousness: they are ideas of benevolence, good order, and happiness. If they are treated with contempt and ridicule, the credit of an obscure individual is a trivial sacrifice, where a public good is in view: it is possible they may appear to some Gentlemen of large estates, and extensive humanity, in the same light they appear to him. These may realize such ideas on a better plan; and if only one single village, one single family, or one single person, is rendered the more virtuous and happy, he will think he has not written, nor lived in vain."

Farewell.

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LETTER

plan; and if only one single village and single family on one day
 father's workbooks you will find various work-rooms, as for example,
 rank of soldiers of different friends; tax; winding silk; knitting stockings;
 knitting wool for hats and socks; sewing, &c. There are also a number of

L E T T E R XIX.

THE amendment and better administration of the poor's-laws, is an object of the highest importance. Some plead for a general reform; others, that only particular regulations are necessary. Whatever laws may be enacted, the *minutia* in the executive part, will still depend, in a great measure, on the good sense and humanity of the persons to whom it is intrusted. If these want understanding or sensibility to do what is right, we must suffer: if *power* only is wanting, *you* can supply it. The standard of perfection will not be found in the law, much less in those who are to be governed: we can only balance on the side of the greater good, or the lesser evil.

To investigate this object with propriety, you should survey with care a *workhouse* or two in these cities, and enter into a detail of the management of them. In the comparative view of the *houses of industry*, of which I have said so much, and the *workhouses* of these cities; one of the largest and most considerable, is *St. Martin's in the Fields*, which I mentioned in my last: this covers more ground than any other, and is the newest structure; but it is a single building, and far from being complete, the church library obstructing the continuation of the square, which at best is not big enough for so vast a number as *six hundred paupers*, and upwards: It is an established maxim, that it is prejudicial to give money to out-pensioners.

In this workhouse you will find various work-rooms, viz. for *spinning*, yarn or *worsted of different fineness*; *flax*; *winding silk*; *knitting stockings*; *knitting caul for hair and wigs*; *sewing*, &c. Here are also a number of
dormitories;

dormitories; and likewise *infirmaries* for different kinds of diseases; but no *halls* for their regular dieting. In this last particular it is very defective. A few of the paupers mess together; but all are left to eat in their chambers or dormitories. Under these circumstances, you will judge it to be so much the more difficult to keep the air in a proper state for health: in general, this house is insufficient for the entertainment of so vast a number.

The area within the building, constitutes their *burying ground*, in which they have a charnel house for the immediate reception of the corpses; and another, if I mistake not, for bones dug up. This is convenient, provided the number of the dead is not great; or that they make their graves deep. I must observe, that in order to keep themselves in health, and preserve the health of the city, they should use *quick lime* to destroy the bodies, as is practised in many parts of *Europe*; observing also to keep the ground level, by occasionally removing the soil from the surface; otherwise, in process of time, they will collect a mountain. As to the impression the living may receive of *mortality*, by the graves being under their *nose*; I believe it does neither good nor harm.

In this workhouse, they have what they call a *sweeper*, whose business it is to take his rounds daily, and see that every part of the house be clean. Supposing him to be a *pauper*, he ought to be one of the most active and intelligent, and to have two or three attendants; being also obliged to make a daily report, to the governor or master of the workhouse residing on the spot. This report should extend to persons as well as places, that if any pauper is incorrigibly filthy, or omittive in his duty, he may be treated as an offender.

The parish of *Mary la Bonne*, is under the conduct of persons of fortune and distinction: they are upon the eve of building a capital workhouse: I hope it will be so large, airy, and commodious, as to serve as a pattern to other parishes, which may hereafter build *new workhouses*, or make additions to their old ones. If we mean to preserve the poor in health; to give them comfort by industry; peace, by good order;

order, and piety by practice; and present them with a prospect of happiness in both worlds; this must be done, and a limited number of paupers admitted.

As cleanliness is one of the most material articles to accomplish this salutary purpose, the governors of *Mary la Bonne*, I hear, mean to have the ground floors made of *stone*; and all the upper ones of *stucco*. These will be much easier cleansed than boards, and prevent an accumulation of dust. They will also have iron bedsteads, and paint them green, to prevent the breeding of vermin, and facilitate cleanliness. Their grand point is, to possess sufficient room, so that the *paupers* may be dieted in messes, in *halls*, and not in their *dormitories*; the latter being devoted to *rest* only. If they can carry this plan into execution, they will do themselves honour.

By thus dining in *halls*, much waste may be prevented. Thefts and purloinings are the frequent consequences of the present method of great workhouses. The stealing of provisions by the *paupers* themselves, ought to be resented with a more rigid severity than is generally practised. The laws, in this instance, require some revival; for this practice does not less favour of sacrilege, than of robbing churches. To plunder the poor by a *pauper*, is more criminal, than by any other person.—Preparation for ventilation, I hope, will not be forgotten: nothing effectual can be done without it.

You are not unacquainted that Queen *Anne* promoted the building of a number of *new churches*: these will become useless, unless we now add a number of *new workhouses*, as well as *new prisons*. If we mean to enjoy the fruits of peace and good order, we *must do this*, as the primary concern of domestic œconomy. But as it is more difficult to build a real workhouse with brick and mortar, than an imaginary one with pen and ink; the most rational expedient, supposing they remain as they now are, is to restrain the number of paupers to be admitted into them, respectively. I have already said much on this subject: I have only to add, that in the investigation of this object of limitation, an impartial view should be taken, and due regard had to the situation,

the areas, the distances of other buildings, and the quality of the neighbourhood; with such other circumstances as may give you a just idea of the fitness of the house to receive any certain number of the king's subjects; and the cause of the distress which may have been created.

In order to remedy every real evil that may exist, and take nothing upon vulgar report, let us proceed in our enquiries regularly: To question vestry-clerks without a clue in hand, will not answer. Give me leave to suggest in what manner you might proceed by *motion* in your house. To require,

1. That the account should be *uniform*. If the mode of making it is not ascertained, the comparative view of the respective parishes will bewilder you, and discover less from what causes the misery and mortality arise.

2. A gross number, at any given time, will not answer the purpose; it must be the medium or middle number on two years, taken from weekly reports: but as these may not be kept,

3. Allow the officers a year before they make their report, that those who have *no regular account* of past time, may take it upon one year only.

4. That they may conform to the mode, let them understand that, to find the middle number, they must examine their weekly reports, whether it be of one, or of two years; if for two, to add the reports of the weeks, and divide by 104; if of one year only, they will add the weekly reports, and divide by 52.

5. As to the *mortality*, they must look for the gross number dead, and they will easily find how much *per cent.* it comes to.—So far for the general observation.

The account of the children,
from the birth to fifteen years of age, independent of the parochial registers already existing, should be separate, or distinct from the other classes; observing, that every child under six years old, kept in the workhouse above three weeks, is contrary to the 7th of his present Majesty. The registers of such infants, as by that act directed to be kept, will

will discover when the child was born or received, and when sent to nurse, and this also may be called for. The report might contain the following particulars.

1. Middle number of children under six years of age, sent into the country to be nursed in the two years—and the highest and lowest prices paid.

2. Number *per cent.* of such children dead within the two years.

3. Middle number of children under six years of age in the workhouse.

N. B. It is supposed there will always be some such children, as the parish is allowed to keep them there three weeks, but no longer.

4. Number *per cent.* of children who died in the workhouse under six years of age.

5. Middle number of children from six to fifteen years of age in the workhouse.

6. Number *per cent.* of such children died in the workhouse.

7. Middle number of *boys* who learn to knit and spin.

8. Ditto of *girls* who learn to knit.

9. Ditto of *girls* who learn to spin.

10. Ditto of *girls* who spin, knit, and sew.

I distinguish these: the sewing is necessary; but the spinning and knitting may always furnish bread, when they can find no needle-work: and a girl should learn spinning, knitting, and sewing at the same time.

11. Number of *girls* taught household business.

This is more difficult in a workhouse, unless it be for a few of the bigger girls who are under the care of the matron.

12. What other kinds of work done by boys or girls.

13. What number of work-rooms allotted to the children.

14. Size of each such room, in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by the Number (a).

15. Hours allotted for work, from the 1st of *April*, to the 31st of *September*.

16. Hours allotted for work, from the 1st of *October*, to the 31st of *March*.

A a

17. Num-

(a) All rooms should be distinguished by a number; and also marked for what purpose used, as work-room, dormitory, infirmary, &c.

17. Number of children learning to read, and repeat the catechism, and a morning and evening prayer.
18. What hours of the day devoted to their learning.
19. What value they have earned during the week.
20. Middle number of children attending the worship of God on the sabbath-day, according to a weekly account to be kept.
21. Number of dormitories for *boys*.
22. The dimensions of each, in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by a number.
23. Number of beds in each dormitory, respectively, distinguished by a number.
24. Number of boys sleeping in one bed.—

With regard to the females as distinguished.

25. What number of dormitories for *girls*.
26. The dimensions of each dormitory, in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by a number.
27. Number of beds in each dormitory, respectively, distinguished by a number.
28. Number of girls sleeping in one bed.
29. How often there is a change of sheets.
30. How often the *boys* and *girls* change their linen.
31. How often the boys and girls are provided with full clothing.
32. What the boys clothing consists in, and the cost.
33. What the girls clothing consists in, and the cost.
34. Infirmarys peculiarly reserved for boys under 15, each infirmary distinguished by a number, and the dimensions, in feet, length and breadth.
35. Infirmarys for girls under this age, the dimensions of them, in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by a number.
36. How often the children are conducted into the fields to walk, and by whom they are attended.
37. The dimensions, in feet, length and breadth, of six of the smallest apartments used by the country nurses, to whom the parish infants are sent to be nursed.
38. How many children such nurses usually receive into their house, whether belonging to the parish, or to any other person.

This

This may be the middle number, in the medium space, as nearly as it can be come at, otherwise a genuine account of the number usually found, when the children are visited by the officers.

My reason for this minute enquiry is founded upon a knowledge of the number which the avarice of the nurse crowds into her hovel; which, if it were not for her broken windows, would stifle the children. This is an evil which happens much oftener near town, than at a greater distance; and although in general the number preserved in the country exceeds the most sanguine expectation of parliament, with regard to the 7th of his present Majesty; yet I am apprehensive, that the want of attention in this particular, hurries many an infant to his grave.

The reverend gentleman, who so warmly espouses the *houses of industry*, very justly lays much stress on the decency and necessity of distinguishing the sexes.—It is highly proper to have distinct infirmaries for *boys* and *girls*. If they are not habituated to this kind of purity in custom, it is easy to judge what the event will be.

There are other particulars in the interior œconomy of a workhouse, beyond what I have mentioned, which may naturally occur upon an examination; but a definitive answer to each of these questions respecting children, will shew what kind of conveniences are in use, and what are neglected. Every workhouse should be possessed of such distinct apartments as I have mentioned, in order to the support of decency and regularity. That any one is so accommodated, is a question I cannot answer in the affirmative, from any personal knowledge.

The officers, in the report proposed, must proceed in the same manner by a *register*, distinguishing the adults into four classes, viz.

From *Fifteen to thirty-five*—*Thirty-five to fifty*—*Fifty to sixty*—*Sixty upwards*.

1. Middle number of paupers, from fifteen to thirty-five, in the workhouse (a).

Al a 2 2. Number

(a) Where accounts have been actually kept, these reports may be made on two years, otherwise we may take them on the one to be kept—but let them be all made at the same time.

2. Number of these *per cent.* died in the year.
3. Middle number of paupers from thirty-five to fifty.
4. Number of these *per cent.* died in the year.
5. Middle number of paupers from fifty to sixty.
6. Number of these *per cent.* died in the year.
7. Middle number of paupers from sixty upwards.
8. Number of these *per cent.* died in the year.
9. Work-rooms allotted the paupers; dimensions in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by a number.
10. How many work in each room respectively, distinguishing the room and kind of work.
11. What hours they work, from the 1st of *April*, to the 30th of *September*.
12. What hours they work from the 1st of *October*, to the 31st of *March*.
13. The dormitories for men, their dimensions in feet, length and breadth, distinguishing each by a number.
14. Number of beds in each dormitory.
15. The largest number of persons ever put into a bed.
16. Number of infirmaries for *women*; the dimensions of each in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by a number.
17. Beds in the womens infirmaries, distinguishing the number of each.
18. The greatest number of sick persons put into one bed.
19. *Work-rooms*, the dimensions of each in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by a number.
20. The middle number of persons employed in each room.
21. What kind of work performed in each room.
22. Number of men and women turned of 15 years old that can spin.
23. Number of these that can knit.
24. Number of paupers that can spin and knit.
25. Number, of sixty years old and upwards, capable of work.
26. Number of halls appropriated to dieting the paupers; their dimensions in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by numbers.
27. Numbers of persons dieted in each.
28. Infirmaries or dormitories appropriated to lying-in women; their dimensions in feet, length and breadth, distinguished by a number.

29. The greatest number of lying-in women received at a time.
30. The methods used to keep all the apartments ventilated and fumigated.
31. The regulations in use for washing the persons of paupers when admitted (a).
32. Number of physicians attending the workhouse.
33. Number of surgeons attending the workhouse.
34. Number of apothecaries—Charge by the year for the drugs wanted.
35. At what hours the paupers have regular prayers, morning and evening.
36. What person generally officiates.
37. Number of paupers turned of fifteen, who usually attend divine service at church on the sabbath-day.
38. Number of decrepid persons who never go abroad.
39. How often the vicar, or his curate, attends to administer the sacrament to such of the paupers as are inclined to discharge this duty.
40. What regulations there are with regard to paupers going out occasionally?
41. The charge of the diet for each person *per annum* at this time.
42. The charge of the clothing each person, on the middle number of paupers above 15 years old.
43. The charge of the clothing children under 15, on the middle number.
44. The charge of each nursed child, on an average, *per annum*.
45. The lowest price, *per week*.
46. The middle number of the out-pensioners.
47. The allowance to out-pensioners each *per annum* on an average.
48. The salaries, wages, house-rents, and all contingent charges, not comprehended in the several articles mentioned, each pauper, *per annum*, on the middle number in the workhouse.

These

(a) Hot and cold baths are essentially necessary in workhouses, distinguishing the situation of paupers when admitted, and the diseases with which some are afflicted.

These particulars being authoratively demanded, and a year given for the delivering in of the account, it would put the workhouses in a method superior to any which they now follow; and the allowance of such time would be deemed a very ingenious conduct on the part of the *House of Commons*. It could not fail of putting the *parish officers upon their guard*, to regulate their conduct with propriety during the year: it would give them a habit of acting in an orderly and beneficial manner: It might mark out in what they were deficient, to represent the same to the parishioners: or if any powers are wanting from parliament for the benefit of the poor, and the good conduct of the house. By such means, each parish would learn of another; and thus the best regulated would become a model to the rest, and every one would be benefited by the discovery.

I know very well, that scarce a parish is duly provided with such room and convenience as is absolutely necessary to do justice to the *paupers*, or to those who take the laborious task of governors, directors, or overseers: but this I apprehend is more their *fault*, than their *misfortune*; for every man who takes the office, should demand the conveniences necessary to it. This would bring things to a short issue; for the parochial laws vesting the officers, in conjunction with the justice of the peace, with the power of *King, Lords, and Commons*, with respect to the tax that is necessary; let them exert their power, and they would soon be able to discharge their duty with the strictest propriety. In the issue the parishioners would find the charge much lighter, than in the manner they are now labouring, under a penurious injudicious administration of such power; poisoning their poor; and, often times destroying their own health.

Nothing can be more obvious, than that every workhouse of the least consideration, ought to be exact in keeping a register of its paupers, distinguishing *males* and *females*, and dividing each into four or five classes of different ages. This would administer very much to their acquaintance with the objects, and what is to be done for them.

You will perceive what my reasons are for urging you to move for a committee for such an investigation; as it will naturally produce many beneficial consequences with respect to the establishment of a *salutary police*.

1. That the health of these cities may not be injured by diseases, bursting forth from any such accumulation of filthiness, or nursery of misery, as a workhouse often is.

2. That the *paupers* may have *fair play*, by room for health, labour, and instruction; and consequently, that the number to be received into the respective workhouses, may be duly limited according to its ability to receive paupers; and not suffered to go on in so slovenly, slavish, absurd, cruel, and unprofitable a manner.—This is no romantic speculation, but the clearest dictate of *common sense*.

A plan of this kind would serve equally for *hospitals*, of which there is so great a number in these cities. It seems to be the duty of the magistrate, or the legislator, to call for the same account from the governors of them, to be delivered after twelve months. I grant there is a difference between a community, maintained by *private munificence*, and one supported by a parliamentary tax: but there is a debt due to the public in both cases; and it should be known, if the public is well or ill served by *volunteers*, as well as by the *mercenary soldier*—And it is right, those who do their duty should be *applauded*; and those who neglect it, *chastised*. Perhaps there would be no need of any chastisement, for the very reason that there is a *check*; but where there is no check, I fear, in a dissolute age like this, some things go wrong, that are supposed to be going right. Some hospitals publish their accounts annually; and while there is no *complaint*, every thing is supposed to go right. However, I am sure that a communication of good works, operates as a restraint on evil deeds: and that you, as a *legislator*, may be supposed less subject to partiality, than a *magistrate*, who may happen to be the *head* of the hospital. I leave this part to your own reflexions.

In the mean while I grasp my object, with respect to the *restraint* of the number to be admitted into workhouses, without which nothing can be done to good effect. Were every capital parish possessed of a workhouse as big as *Chelsea Hospital*, it would not avail, if there was no limitation of numbers. Upon this principle, I have expostulated with many worthy gentlemen, with whom I am connected, in these terms: "Every hospital, however vast its dimensions, has a certain number of beds, and is always deemed *full*, with such a number of patients. Is our workhouse never to be full? Is it to be filled with human bodies, as you stick pins in a pincushion? Shall we go on till it pours forth its dead as *Marseilles* did her citizens, during the dreadful plague with which she was afflicted. Or, to come home, as we suffered in 1665, when 68596 of our *London* citizens perished by the plague; besides 28708 who died of other distempers? According to our bills of mortality, these cities make five or six thousand dead more than born, or buried more than christened, every year: and yet we live upon one of the most healthy spots in the world; in a climate not subject to earthquakes, nor any intemperature, which destroys like the sword of an avenging angel. Can any man of the least candour doubt, but that our mortality is much increased by the filthiness, and impure air which the *poor* and *indigent* are condemned to breathe? Is not this one effect of the iniquity, folly, and insensibility of the rich? And are not our workhouses as much distinguished for *mortality* as for filth? You are subject to the command of the justice of the peace, who sends to you such *paupers* as he thinks are the proper objects of your *charity*; but it is *your fault* if you submit to receive into your house any excess of a number fit to be received. If you hurt the health, obstruct the industry, or confound the good order of your paupers, the sin is at your door. Our workhouse is scarce big enough to contain 180 persons, servants included. We once, after an elaborate debate, most *righteously* resolved not to admit into it, above 280. There are at this time above 360; and if the magistrate sends 360 more, according to the reasoning which is adopted, they must *be all received*! You say, "for God's sake tell us what we are to do. If the magistrate sends the pauper, we are not warranted to refuse him." I deny the principle. The house is full. You *cannot* receive them. I believe in omnipotence, and in the infinity of space, although

although my comprehension extends to neither; but *my senses* convince me, it is impossible a creature like myself, can perform the offices of life, without a certain portion of space—I am sure that neither health can be preserved, nor good order and oeconomy promoted, without suitable room. Let the number of the paupers sent to us be what it may, by my consent, not one shall be admitted into this house, beyond the limited number, at which it is formally and authoritatively deemed *full*.—I do not say, others shall be left in the streets to perish: The real distressed person must be relieved some other way. It is to prevent the miseries of a *house-full* of fellow-creatures, that I shut the doors against others. Let the magistrate be as liberal as he pleases with his *orders*, not a single pauper shall come within these gates, till there is a *vacancy*. As one of the governors appointed by parliament, to judge in what manner the poor are to be preserved, I will not hazard the lives of our proper number, by taking *one* more. If you really think the *justices* must be obeyed, let us appeal to parliament to restrain them; perhaps parliament, in pity to their prejudices, may direct what shall be done, in order to prevent this *pernicious, deadly custom*. You see how inadequate our workhouse is to the number which is crowded on us continually. You have gone as far as 380!—It does not appear to me, that you reject one, whose settlement is indisputable. At some unlucky time, in spite of our fumigations with vinegar, *the event may be deplorable!* I know you mean well; but you do not therefore *act* right. You do not perceive, that our ancestors made provision for such a number of paupers as called on *them*: the *times* are changed; shall not *we* make a *proper* provision for such a number as call on *us*? Have you any secret by which *you* can accommodate *three* persons, where *they* received but *one*? Do your utmost to make the indigent independent of the parochial tax; but add no accumulated load to their misery, nor establish a plan to propagate it from generation to generation, in order to recommend yourselves as good officers. The parishioners may revolt against the charge of building a new workhouse; but is it less your duty to represent the case?—Is not the next thing to having a large house, to bring a suitable number of people into a small one?—You serve the parishioners *gratis*, faithfully, and upon principle—They are in *your* debt; not you in *theirs*. Behold the inconsistency! They

complain of the *present charge*: does it produce all the good which they expect? You do your utmost upon the *present plan*: are the consequences of *such plan* happy? You can never promote health nor industry, decency, piety, or any other good, in so effectual a manner as you wish.—The plan is *bad*: the effect of it will be the same. I am sensible, from the quality of your paupers, that so much labour cannot be expected, as some fondly imagine; but I apprehend a great deal more may be done, than is done: more health may be enjoyed; more virtue promoted, and your objects may go in a brisker circulation into the world. Your credit will rise with your oeconomy; and your oeconomy in proportion to *your room to extend your arms*, and make proper divisions of your *paupers*. I mean not to increase your expence, except it be for *space*. Space will make industry flourish! Labour will be more abundant.—Your kitchen might possibly be conducted with more frugality; your clothing rather contracted, as the number of your objects in the house would be lessened.—You tell me, that were the plan I recommend to take place, the paupers who would apply, in hopes they should have an *allowance* made them, *out of the house*, knowing they should be refused admittance *into it*, would exceed all computation. It may be so: but this proves nothing; the *application* can avail, only as the object is entitled to relief from the degree of the distress; of which you are to judge. This reason appears to me as a further proof of your servile adherence to custom, and the inconsistency of it. I readily grant, that many of the kind of people who are in the train of applying for admission into this workhouse, will plead for it; and the *justice of the peace* may give them orders for relief: But when he knows how you are circumstanced, and upon what principles you act, it is hardly to be conceived he will *distress* you with orders which he knows you can with no consistency comply with. He must be sensible that your house, like every other thing, has its bounds; and if it were necessary to litigate the point with him, the last resort must be to *parliament*.—You may perchance be obliged to allow some paupers equal to the charge of admittance; or to accommodate them in *some other house*, at a still greater expence: but you will not be the less able to vindicate your conduct. You cannot reverse the order of Nature, and make air and space less necessary to health, labour, and good order.

If the parish prefers making an addition to their workhouse, a greater number of objects may be received. If it will build a new one, it may still be better. It must bear the charge that is necessary; but, for my own part, I will no longer submit to *your plan*: I will not engage to preserve due order and œconomy, where *paupers* have not room for health, nor labour, nor diet, nor sweet air. If when they should be refreshed by rest, for the work of the returning day, they breathe putrid air, human nature will droop: Let us not exact their making bricks *without* straw; but oblige them to make them *with* it. I am confident, that if the house is rendered a *house of labour*, in the issue many of your paupers will chuse to labour for themselves; and perchance you may, *without* the difficulty you dread, keep within the limits prescribed. You are sensible, the out-pensioners never cost us so much as those who are received into the workhouse; and that it is more easy for *us* to discover the real situation of a pauper, than for the justice of the peace to find it out; consequently we shall judge better what is to be done. So far from injuring the poor, or the parishioner, this plan is the only one for the *common good*: it will induce the paupers to labour the more, from the consideration, that it will not avail, merely to give evidence of the right of settlement, in order to lead a *lazy life in a workhouse*, should any one desire it. Let the event be what it may, in the name of God, break through this insalutary practice! Render the care of the poor more respectable; and no longer intimidate people of fortune and condition from attending the workhouse, for fear of being poisoned with the stench of an unnatural congregation of numbers. Invite them to come to it as the asylum of mercy; the scene of obedience to the great lawgiver of our religion! I appeal to your own hearts! It would be endless to relate what dreadful mortality has attended the bringing a crowd of people into a small space. I refer you to your own annals, registered in your death-book. Behold *this* list of the *dead*, under some of your predecessors!—Let us not walk in the same tracks of misery and mortality. There is no possibility of establishing a *regular œconomy* with a house so crowded! Justice cannot be done to the *paupers*, to the *parish*, nor to the *nation*! You must limit the number, according to the dimensions of your house, and the rooms it contains, or renounce order

and œconomy. Shew an example to other parishes, whose practice is just the same as our own. Exercise your *common-sense* and humanity; and by a *resolute* adherence to a *right principle*, break the shackles of custom: emerge from this gulph of *misery*: no longer walk in so rugged a path, but change your ways, that the *pauper* may rejoice in the labour of his hands, and bless the tongue that bids him work; and the heart that dictates the proper means of preserving his *life*, and rendering his *industry profitable*. To complain of the enormous weight of the poor-rates, and not establish a regular plan of œconomy, is a double absurdity. I mean nothing *new*, nothing *romantic*: If health, if industry, if labour, and good order depend on restraining the number of your *paupers* to be admitted, shew that you are good *officers*, good *subjects*, and good *men*, by acting with vigour, on a *true plan*!"

Thus have I often expostulated with my fellow-labourers and brother officers; but so it is, *persuasion has lost its name*! They are inclosed within the magic circle of *custom*, and can be disenchanted only by an *act of parliament*. It rests on you to reform *bad customs*, and preserve the people! Farewell.

LETTER

[illegible]

TO *do good and forbear from evil*, is the summary of human life, under its best circumstances. We have explored the fields of benevolence, with respect to the *ignorant*, the *perverse*, the *indigent* and the *distrest*. In a commercial state like this, tho' *wealth* and *luxury* will make many idle and profligate; diligence and assiduity cannot fail of a reward.

In the mean time, the want of a regular *police* will occasion much the greater portion of misery, as the conduct of the poor convinces us every day; and there is no remedy to soften the rigours of it so effectual as pursuits of industry; not only to fill up time agreeable to the order of Providence, but in conformity to the decree of Heaven, shew them that men are born to labour.

Next to husbandry, *spinning* and *knitting* are the most essential, to produce food and raiment: I apprehend that all *females* turned of six years old, of all ranks and conditions, should be taught to knit and spin: the *rich*, that they may be the more induced as they grow up, to superintend the poor, as the piety of the sex should lead them to do; and see them well taught and practised in these simple arts; and the *poor* to be enabled to earn their own bread, however scanty it may be, as long as health or age permits. These are arts which both children and adults may carry with them into the world, and which must be of the greatest benefit to them, especially when they have no other employment. In blindness, or in darkness, they may be enabled by *knitting* to get something towards their maintenance.

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In some parts of this kingdom spinning and knitting are very much in use; in others, *unknown*, or neglected. Not many years since I had a visit from a man who told me a *melancholy story* of his poverty; and the distress of his family, consisting of *seven children*, from six to thirteen years old: I asked him how they were employed; and how much the youngest might earn by knitting and spinning? "O Lord! Sir!" says he, "they are too young to do any thing for themselves: besides, it is *not the custom in London, to teach children, in private families, to knit and spin.*" I believe the poor man was in the right as to the last part of his story with respect to *custom*, but very much mistaken as to the children's being too young.

If parish officers were vested with more power to encourage industry, in order to prevent parishioners from becoming *paupers*, they might keep many out of the paths which lead so directly to the gallows. I have talked to many prostitutes, and other wretched beings, the daughters of soldiers and labourers, and low mechanicks, who were such strangers to *knitting and spinning*, as hardly to know the difference of a *needle* and a *pin*. Shall we think of no kind of inspection into such calamitous effects of *ignorance and idleness*? I have heard it objected, that knitting of stockings, at best, falls so much short of *weaving*, it can never turn to account: My answer is, *something* may be gained: I know not of any substitute: It is not to be imagined that every one can turn weaver, nor is a loom portable like knitting-needles. This gives an active motion to the hands, and upon this account is a valuable acquisition—And as to *spinning*, I have lately seen some industrious ladies spinning by a small portable spinning-wheel, which makes no noise, so that the mother might spin and teach her children, or the sister do the same, and not disturb the brother at his book: the price of it may soon be rendered easy.

With regard to children, I must observe that it is a vulgar error, and a gross absurdity, to set them to work, on very *coarse materials*. Spinning or knitting coarse yarn for instance, is by no means proper for *little tender fingers*; nor can the produce of spinning it, amount to a quarter part in value, of what might be done by the same young person in the same time, of finer thread or worsted. Thread for cambricks

bricks is spun by children, and none but children can spin it well: it is done more by the *feeling* than the *sight*: It seems to be a gross perversion of the order of Nature to supply harsh materials for children to work up.

There cannot be a stronger proof how much we stand in need of a new code of poor's laws, than the vast variety and succession of litigated points; even in the instance of renting a farm of ten pounds *per annum*; whether the law means that it shall be in the same, or may be in two different parishes; whether ten pounds rent paid, or so much produced: whether a part of a house, having a separate entrance, tho' the renter pays ten pounds, be one tenement; with all the variety which the different situation of things may furnish to exercise the ingenuity of a learned casuist; and without producing any rule of court, for we find the same case often adjudged different ways.—

If we continue the principle of the poor's laws relating to *parochial settlements*, let us consider whether we may not render the obligation reciprocal, between those who bestow, and those who receive the gift. I propose to your serious consideration to give twelve months notice, and after this time to require, that all persons turned of eight years old, and not exceeding forty, in order to entitle them to a parochial settlement, shall produce a certificate signed by two reputable housekeepers, and attested by the vicar of the parish where they have lived, that they can knit in such a manner as to make a pair of stockings, worth at least twelve-pence within the space of five days, or spin to gain at least an equal value. It is not to be imagined, if they could do so much, but that many would be qualified to do a great deal more. Overseers, in collecting the poor's rates being required to give notice that this is a legal condition of settlement, it must have its effect on the minds of the *indigent*; and they would soon find the sweets of it: the custom would grow familiar with the law, and the condition give new life to industry. If we give the alternative, *spin*, or *knit*, so as to gain only two or three pence in a day, it must needs be attended with happy consequences. It seems natural to suppose that this condition

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of right, derived from the parochial law, would operate in their favour under all circumstances.

That there are so many indigent persons who are ignorant both of *spinning* and *knitting*; and breed up their children as they were bred up themselves, is not surprising. Our *poor* compute on their *inheritance* in the parochial law; and are therefore the less active.

Amidst the vast variety of the circumstances of men, it is evident, many must work for others, as well as for themselves; and that those who are not arrived to years of labour, and those that are past that period, make up a considerable part of mankind. There is another large class, who do not add to the common stock: These are born and *bred* in idleness; and great compassion is due to them; but the wisest expression of such compassion is to remove them from those scenes, where idleness is adopted as a principle of conduct; for injustice being grafted on it, the event must be injurious to the community. This departure from the true principle, by which men are entitled to the common protection, should be rendered abhorrent to the rectitude of the heart.—To bring this matter to the standard of the infant mind, bread ought to be presented to the eyes of children, to be given only as the reward of industry. They should learn that they have no right to touch it, 'till they have earned it, by the employment of their hands.

On this equitable principle, I hope you will think it a sober speculation, to propose *conditions to entitle to a settlement*; and not like the labouring poor themselves, imagine them born to an inheritance of bread, whether they contribute by *labour* to the common stock, or not. The ordinary complaint is,

1. How shall we employ the poor?
2. How shall we prevent their imposing on us?

As to the last question, it is too trivial to be much regarded, seeing that there is scarce such a thing as possessing wealth, and at the same

time pleading extreme poverty, or being idle, and appearing to work; yet the vulgar notion is; "it is impossible to find out who is in real want or great distress."

The first article indeed, "how we shall employ the poor," requires a serious answer; and this is, "*buy their labour, in case it shall appear they have no other purchaser*; but give no more for it than it is fairly worth; remembering that there are three objects for employment, which are inexhaustible, a *house to cover us, raiment, and food*: Labour in the field, or in the city, in building, making roads, paving streets, in a thousand kinds of manufactures, and as many of gardening and agriculture. It is therefore an unpardonable absurdity at any time to pretend that the means of employment cannot be *procured* for the poor. On these depend, not only their own support, but that of the first and greatest of mankind; and the more people there are, supposing sufficient land to cultivate, and materials to work up, the richer will the people be. We see this abundantly proved in *America*, where the land is cheap. It arises from the dissipation which riches have introduced, that we leave the part of mankind least inclined to *virtue*, or most exposed to want, to the humane principle of our poor-laws, to carve for themselves; and to eat as much, and work as little, as they please. This is in a great measure the case of many thousands in this kingdom.

You will not suppose that I mean to take part *against* the poor; I am pleading *for* them: The matter in question is the state and condition of our *poor country*, respecting her *police*; the proper management of the indigent part of our fellow-subjects; and the discipline of those on whom our very existence depends. What avails our wealth; our skill; our vast improvements; the fertility of our land; and the gracious showers falling from the heavens, which produce so much marrow and fatness, if we want *resolution* to make every child of *Adam*, being a subject, know that his life depends on industry: That very few things are necessary to life; but such things as are necessary cannot be procured without labour, and the sweat of the brows: That as *custom* is equal to *nature*, labour becomes natural: That necessity is the mother of

invention, and gives all human actions their energy? Those whose fortunes and *fancies*, lead them into an opinion of a thousand *imaginary wants*; these also appear as *necessary* to *their* happiness; and that the real necessities of one gratify the imaginary wants of another.

With regard to *paupers*, let us suppose a number of them set on shore on a spot, where shelter, food, and raiment, are provided for a short time only, and they see inevitable death before their eyes, if they do not set heartily to work to furnish themselves with the means of living: Supply them with brick and tile, lime and timber, and tools for building: Let them have *flax* and *wool*, spinning-wheels and looms, scissors and needles, spades and grain to sow: let them have iron too; would this little desolate colony, who in a workhouse might not gain a tenth part of their support, perish through idleness? It is confessed, that there is yet a large portion of this island uncultivated.—

The *commons*, which feed the cows or sheep, the hogs or turkies of the neighbouring cottagers, or more affluent inhabitants, cannot be called useless: but there is much land of an inferior quality, and many a barren heath, where the addition of soil, with the common heat of the sun, and the showers from heaven, the force of art and labour would render fertile. In the same manner, villages may be dispersed over some of our downs, where the inhabitants might find nourishment. The sheep would give them clothing; and a small portion of land furnish food. *Resolution* and *discipline*, with *encouragement* and *assistance* from the affluent, work much greater wonders.

In the same manner, were we more frugal with regard to the eating so much *wheaten bread*; consuming so much barley in *beer*; and our wild extravagance in our consumption of oats, by horses for pleasure, we should be able to maintain a million or two more people, with great ease. The want of sobriety, of which we so much complain, diminishes our numbers. Let such evils be reformed, and we shall see the happy effects in population. As matters stand, we find heavy complaints of the increase of the poor's tax, as if we had many more people than we could employ or find a support for. These are calamities which hang together in a chain. We are insensible of the evil: as

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arts of peace do not call for greater numbers; we make no provision for the necessities of war.

In the mean while, we must provide for the people who, in spite of our vices, come into the world: The very infant parish-poor now preserved in these cities, are at this time above 8,000, and the parishes are at a loss how to dispose of them. What is to be done, but to remove them, where food and raiment rise from the earth by the culture of mens hands? Those who take such children very young, should be assisted with a suitable apprentice fee; and an honest man, who would take a child at six, seven, or eight years of age; ten or twenty pounds might make both parishes a gainer; for if the child is kept four, five or six years longer, he must cost twice the sum given; and in the issue be of less value to the community.

In the political view, we are to consider children as *colts*, *lambs*, or *calves*; it will cost so much to bring them to a mature state for use; but a boy or girl of a tender age, converted to good use, though after a heavy charge, is valuable; when a *drone*, a *vagabond*, or a *thief*, is but a noxious animal.

Every day's experience proves that we are over-supplied with people in these cities: it need not be so in the country; there is field sufficient for their being employed in *labour*, agriculture and manufactory. Here are so many young persons, that numbers sell themselves, as they call it, in order to be conveyed to *America*, there to enter into a slavish servitude.—Can any conduct be more impolitic or absurd, in a free country? The towns and villages of *England* send at least *six thousand persons* annually to *London*: One would imagine, that the furnishing employment for the indigent in the country, instead of being the first and greatest, is the last and most insignificant object of our *police*. We receive these supplies, without making any returns *in kind*; when it would be easy to transplant the number, of at least 1500 to 2000 parish pauper children yearly. If proper encouragement were given to enlarge the capacities of our *farmers*, *cottagers*, *manufacturers*, and rural *mecha-*

nici, to take charge of the overflowings of these monstrous cities; we need not send the people *abroad* wantonly, as if the labouring poor were of no value at *home*:—Let them be employed, and there will be reason to think our parochial laws promote population. If they suppose the *poor* have a licence to become idle, because there is a provision for them in case of distress; and at the same time transport them for fear of their perishing, it is one of the greatest imaginable absurdities. The evil arises from illiberal notions of our common interest, and a gross inattention to it. If our poor-laws make many improvident, and their improvidency drives them to this extremity; it carries an appearance, as if the provision for the poor, instead of being the means of cherishing them, is the cause of our losing them.

This in effect is making a sacrifice of our best and greatest interest, by a misapplication of the two choicest things in life, *money* and *time*. Every man of fortune, every magistrate and legislator who neglects this charge, is guilty of a breach of trust, and forfeits his title to the honours which he holds in the state. I maintain this to be common sense, common religion, common policy, in the most obvious view of life. Were every man to take his share in the care of the poor, in proportion to his rank and fortune, nothing but such vice as would merit a prison; or infamy, which might require confinement, could interrupt the harmony of society.

The fact is universally acknowledged, that upon the whole *we want people*; rather decreasing by emigration, than increasing by numbers of births. Can this be strength to the nation, or give it defence in war? Shall we make our laws militate against the great purpose for which they were instituted by our pious ancestors? To investigate the cause of the misery we complain of, and find a remedy for it, as far as the nature of the thing will admit, let me recommend to you, in your legislative capacity, to enquire,

1. How many cottages have been levelled to the ground in this kingdom, since 1740?

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This is not so long a period of time, but the number may be nearly ascertained by persons of landed property in regard to their respective estates.

2. What number of cottages have been built, exclusive of those which have been repaired, and from which the inhabitants have not been ejected?

3. What the poor's rates amounted to in 1740; with the price of beef and bread at that time?

4. What the poor's rates amounted to in 1774; with the price of beef and bread in that year?

If you find such rates increased to an amazing degree, and that vagabonds and beggars stroll about, in as great or larger numbers than at former periods of time; it must follow that the improvements of our lands, the increase of our buildings in our towns, and the expansion of our commerce, have not been attended by a proportionate increase of the comforts and supports of life, among the poor; but just the contrary; and consequently that something is out of order.

Though the *affluent* may wallow in luxury; we shall find it generating misery to a great part of the community: and in proportion as *police* is wanted, the labouring part of the nation will sink into an abject and contemptible state. That it is *good*, upon the whole, there should be want and beggary, appears to be a paradox: That *misery* will prevail in a degree, is beyond dispute: But if we do not think of new devices for labour, and a more equitable distribution of the produce of the earth, we level the road to misery; and in the form of *plenty* and splendor trample down *police*, and establish *distress*, as if it were a principle of government. To impute the evil to the decrease of trade, is contrary to the real fact: If we ascribe it to the vices of the common people, we shall come nearer the mark. But who is accountable for their being vicious? Whatever causes may co-operate, the want of *police* is one of the plentiful sources of the calamity, and therefore to this, but not to this only, are we to apply all the healing powers the understanding can suggest.

As to *trade*, it is no paradox to say, that had we less of it, those who work for foreigners might work for themselves, and though they would see less money, they might be supplied with more food and raiment, and better houses to cover them. As there would be less luxury, it seems reasonable to believe the produce of the earth would be more equally divided. Neither *rich* nor *poor* could enjoy the same superfluities; but their real wants would be very few, and virtue might restrain us more from the extravagant use of the good things of nature. By *luxury*, I mean criminal excess, and an expence, beyond the fortunes of individuals. We could not use so many articles which are *not* necessary; and we should not be so much tempted to abuse such as *are*.

But taking things as they are, and endeavouring to keep as much foreign trade as we can, let us remember our *police* at home, in order to make the *common people* as numerous, virtuous, and happy, as reason and experience suggest they might be, under proper management. This is the natural effect of trade in its *second* gradation of improvement. Let us check the effects of the *third*. If the giving the poor proper habitations, advice, and assistance upon all emergencies is right, we must establish schools to teach their children the fear of God; with the means of keeping themselves constantly employed. If such a rule of conduct can promote the glorious end, let us, as individuals, in whose hands rich talents are entrusted, think of the *practice* of our duty to our inferiors, as the truest expression of our love for our country. Good dispositions are essential to the support of good laws; as *good laws* must co-operate with virtue to make good subjects. Such laws come in aid, as a spur to do good, and a bridle to restrain from evil: and we must take the advantage of them.

In order to investigate the object, we must obtain proper knowledge of it: this requires a regular course of enquiry. If we mean to support the race of mankind, and to put our country in a flourishing state, we should consider that the tender passions still prompt the sexes to seek each other: Poverty, however acute, seldom starves love, among the poor; nor will affection for the produce of it be extinguished, whilst *any* virtue remains.

mains. Misery, as I have said, there will be; but extreme poverty among great numbers, in this rich commercial country, should be a *prodigy*! It would be very rarely found, were the lower classes of the people under the discipline of a *good police*; and the *higher* attentive to the important duty of preserving such *police*. But alas! patriotism takes another turn: the *vanity* of words, *jealousies* and *fears*, horses and coaches, fine clothes, and a thousand other fine things, are in a great measure become substitutes for true zeal and the preservation of the people!

How ought our cheeks to redden at the thought that magistrates should imagine they were acting the part of patriots, to *sell* the people into *British* dominions, where they are not wanted (*a*), and remove them from our own island, where labour is so valuable, and ability for defence so important, without a single effort to employ them! Does this wear the pleasing aspect of public love? Were our views less contracted, and we more capable of carrying our ideas beyond the little spot on which we live, we should first think of rebuilding our city houses now in ruins, or of pulling them down; widening narrow streets, and giving the poor air to breathe. Half the sum spent annually in *extravagant feasting*, how many acres would it cultivate? When we hear of numbers flocking over to *America*, from *Scotland* and *Ireland*, by the extravagant extortion and inhuman policy of landlords, we startle at the thought: We see the mote in our brother's eye, but discern not the beam in our own. Instead of weeping at the feet of mock patriotism, *Britannia* may be sculptured, mourning over the ignorance, as well as inactivity of some of her children. It were better, from the contiguity of places to send colonies to *Ireland*, or even to the *Orkneys*, than ship them off for *America*.—Can you tell me, how many acres of *wastes*, or lands half cultivated, are to be found within forty miles of *London*? I believe it is more than possible, in the nature of things, to entertain half a million of people more than there is.

But

(*a*) It has been reported, that in order to prevent the abuse of several miserable beings selling themselves to masters of ships, without knowing what they were about, the magistrates would make the bargain, in a more *decent* manner, and subject these young people to so much "*the less misery*."

But why send our people off this island? Is it to give place to horses to devour our grain, I mean horses of mere pleasure and parade? Then let the poor eat, what the rich may well rejoice in, tho' horses will not feed on it; I mean fish, which Nature has furnished us with, in vast abundance. Are we so trammelled in our politics, as to discourage their eating a *cheap* food, and drive them away because they cannot purchase alimant that is dear? Let us *employ more hands* on the *Banks of Newfoundland*, and bring home *dried fish*, it is most excellent savory meat: we might be sure of admirable diet at three halfpence a pound. They may be glad of such food, in the country whither they would go: and our common people would be glad of it also, if they knew its merit. To let them wander because our *land* is dear, and yet take no advantage of our *waters*, is monstrous! At this rate we must change our system, lower our interest of public funds, and lower our taxes, or we may have a *deserted island*, as well as a *deserted village*. How many rivers have we, which with a little management would produce much good food! *Industry* can never fail of its reward. Where soil cannot be made to bring forth an increase, may not water be introduced to nourish fish for food? We are labouring in some capital works of *water communications*, by which the *fewer* hands are to become necessary: Shall we think of no schemes purposely calculated to employ *a great number of people*, by which they may draw an immediate supply of *food and raiment*? Walk over your grounds. Survey them with an attentive eye. Consider That part as the most valuable, from which you draw the least portion of your income, because it will employ the greatest number of people, and give them bread.—Don't be surprized, I am speaking the language of love for my country, divested of all selfish considerations.—

Where is the country besides this, in which there is any parochial tax for the poor? There are indeed various modes of assisting them in all countries, and those who truly believe particularly in *Christ*, have *Heaven* in prospect, as a reward for their beneficence. *We*, who live under a government the most lenient upon the earth, enjoying the purest religion, have made a steady and permanent provision for the poor; but the law is misconstrued, the execution of it is neglected by the wealthy and intelligent, and its advantages abused by the indigent.

indigent. It justly supposes its objects chiefly to consist of the very young, who are not arrived to years of labour; and the very aged, who are past their ability for it. Others whom we provide for, are presumed to be *lame* or *blind*, *sick*, or plunged by misfortunes into a temporary calamity. For all these, relief is afforded: the infant is protected till he grows up; and if he is not claimed by his parents, he is in due time put out by parish officers. Unless we abuse the poor's law even to forfeit so grand a charter, human nature cannot be disgraced: no one can be left to perish either in *infancy*, *middle age*, or in *years of hoary locks*.

This seems to be the grand outline of this law. In process of time we have enlarged our plan: *Hospitals* and *infirmaries* unnumbered have arisen out of the defects, or unavoidable inabilities of it; but these ought not, because of their greater local importance, to lower the reputation of the parochial institution; for That which is general, permanent, and founded on law, should be considered as entitled to the first rank. Villages, or little towns, cannot administer such aid in physic or surgery, as the residence of the most skilful physicians and surgeons; and so far we must give credit to our policy as well as humanity, in such noble structures: but if we had discharged our duty, in a proper manner, there could not have been any occasion for congregating the poor, as in the case of *county houses of industry*, which equally depend on the parochial tax. If we examine our own hearts with attention, we shall find, that our dependence on this tax, together with our hospitals, has deceived many into a belief that our business is done. When we add our private beneficence to individuals, and still behold misery predominate, we wonder at the event, and think the disease incurable! Most truly it has this appearance, 'till we consider, that the grand pillar of human happiness is still wanting. The doctrines of labour and religion are not properly inculcated. Many are bred up in idleness, as if it were a *profitable science*: and of consequence pay no regard to moral obligations.

It is evident, we are come to that state of debility in morals, that vast numbers of us require the *ablest advice*. We presume a great

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deal too much on our liberty, forgetting that coercive power, and the fear of punishment, are the grand preservatives of order and the guardians of human happiness. Upon this principle, and as something contributory to the remedy of this moral and political disease, I humbly propose as a means to recover the reputation of industry among certain classes of the people, and in general to preserve the dignity of the parochial law, that the *title* to a settlement should be conditional.

1. No child turned of eight years old, nor adult under fifty, shall have a *legal title* to the privileges of the parochial law, merely for having been born, or living in servitude, on a certain spot.

2. They shall do something for themselves, that others may do something for them.

3. Our ancestors before *Queen Elizabeth's days*, as well as after them, were severe enough in their exactions, but not aware they might counteract their own principle, and provide for *wants*, without providing any means of preventing such wants.—*Dissoluteness* having poisoned the minds of the people, *shame* has renounced her attributes; and it ceases to be wonderful that many should demand a support, who might do without public assistance! They blush not to confess their ignorance of the means of getting a morsel of bread. The reformation we stand in need of, must be founded in *coercive power*, exercised with a steady, tho' lenient hand. And what can this so properly be, as to induce the poor, by motives of interest, and a sense of shame, to apply themselves to the means of obtaining their own support, by weakening the force of that security on which they presume they shall find one, let their conduct be what it may? I propose to add a *condition* or two, as a title to the parochial settlement.

1. That after twelve months (or a longer time, if you think proper) all male children turned of eight years old, shall spin and knit.

2. All females, of the same age, spin, knit, and sew, except in certain cases which may be provided for.

The work may be as easily accomplished, as to teach them to *speak*, especially when they see the mother, the brothers and sisters, employed in the same way.

3. That they shall be able, when called upon, to repeat, in a proper and intelligible manner, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and a morning and an evening prayer.

With regard to a child's inability to learn, the instances would be rare, that any boy or girl would not have a capacity for it; and if the indulgence of the parochial law were less lavish, such qualifications would become familiar. The seeming severity in exacting such conditions, would unavoidably operate in the establishment of the rural schools, mentioned (a). This would be a two-fold incentive to useful knowledge: it would prevent the poor from being so totally undisciplined, and so barbarously ignorant. Their knowledge of morality would thus be established on a more certain foundation: They would more attentively consider the existence of the one true God, and of *Jesus Christ*, the great Prophet, Saviour, and Teacher of the christian world.

4. If they are not of the *Anglican* national church, they must, in that case, bring certificates from their respective pastors, giving evidence that the pauper has been bred under them; or hath been taught such religious duties as their persuasion requires.

5. You will ask me, supposing they are ignorant of these things, and are of no church, know nothing of religion, and can as well fly as knit or spin; are they to be starved to death? No: let them be considered as vagrants, or casual poor: they may be objects of commiseration, without any legal title to settlement, derived from a local inhabitation.

6. If they have no claim to a support for want of a qualification with respect to labour and religion, they are in a state of disgrace; and should be so considered by other paupers.

The great compassion shewn by our parochial laws, which were intended to promote good order and the fear of God, on the present careless plan of *bad education*, is defeated: It was never in contemplation that the poor would forget God. *Conditions* being made, the overseers must be required to deliver to the resident minister, or curate of the parish, a list of the poorest part of the parishioners; and at the same time acquaint *him* of the conditions of their legal settlements. If such reverend gentleman is found negligent in his
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(a) See page 169.

part of the duty required, viz. to admonish from the pulpit, and to attend the decrepid in a workhouse, or what else may belong to his office; after a respectful remonstrance, it should be considered as a decent subject of complaint to his *diocesan*: and if it shall appear to the vestry, or other parochial meeting, that the *first* complaint to the bishop has produced no good; the *second* should be made with some public notoriety, so that his lordship might stand bound to take cognizance of it; and as the head shepherd of his diocese, enquire into the merits of the cause. As this regulation would add to the duty of the clergy, I mean that it should increase their pay: I am sure it would add to their dignity, and give them that weight and influence over the people, which is the very thing of which we stand in so great need.

Unless we mean to refine away our religion, we must ere long do something of this kind, or we may live to see the most melancholy effects from the profligacy of the people: *There is no living without religion*. As custom is now supposed to stand, the vicar or his curate attends the workhouse to administer the sacrament to the aged pauper, who cannot go abroad: and it is presumed that every clergyman, in compliance with his call to preach the gospel, is equally disposed to do the duty of a disciple of his Master, and act in conformity to the great truths of christianity. The clergy are deemed essential to our constitution, and have a share in making all our laws: Will not the bishops be glad to further this temporary authority, to exhort and admonish every clergyman who may be omiffive in his duty? Every true friend to the constitution, will rejoice to see a police established, by which church and state may harmonize in their views of promoting the public happiness.

It is a vulgar notion, that our *liberty* is an impediment to our *police*: our *irreligion* is one impediment, and our *licentiousness* another. We sit down contented, as if we *could not* enjoy both *liberty* and *police*: To judge from the event, we must have *both*, or we shall have *neither*. If the existence of a nation, in a state of freedom, depends on the good order, piety, and industry of the inhabitants, and acts of parliament are sovereign mandates; what hinders our having a *police*? To provide food and raiment for the poor, and not instruction how to conduct them.

themselves as good subjects and christians, to take the best care both of body and soul, is a gross absurdity. This proposal may, at the first view, appear as visionary, because it is *new*, *pious*, or *strict*. If it were asked, May it not be left to the parishes?—Is it not too small an object?—To the *first* question I answer, that the want of simplicity and piety, is the chief cause of the national distress in question.—To the *second*:—Will you leave That to be decided by those, whose indecision, and inconsistent conduct, and indeed their want of power, is the very evil which calls for your aid? Let us take care not to impute to the insignificance, or smallness of the object, sentiments which derive their origin from the littleness of our minds. Are not labour and religion the *first* and *greatest* objects?

It is a common complaint, that *paupers* are often *insolent*, presuming on their *right*, derived from the parochial laws. This right, in the very nature of things, must be founded on reasonable conditions. All right is by mutual compact: I propose reasonable terms of qualification for a legal settlement, such as include the highest interest of the persons concerned.—The duties of humanity will still stand on their proper basis: and no law can be supposed to preclude the exercise of them.—I am firmly of opinion, an establishment of this kind would introduce a regular police, on the solid foundation of *interest* and *self-preservation*.

A modern man of pleasure, or a mere man of business, ignorant of the state of the poor, and unaccustomed to such reflexions, will smile at such propositions. He will desire something which he supposes to be of more dignity in a national view, and may sarcastically say, This smells too much of the tabernacle; or perhaps think it invades the province of the church. The supposition, that every thing that is pious, is therefore methodistical, or the produce of false tenets in religion; is one of the foolish distinctions of the age we live in. In general, our refinements, with respect to religion, degenerate into impiety: we feel the effects, but we do not trace them up to their cause, lest we should find reason, whilst we complain of others, to blush at our own misconduct.

As to the *minutia* of police, which consists in a number and well-blended compound of small articles, I must observe, that a good general should be acquainted with the petty, as well as the grand detail of war. If the soldier is not provided with a warm mess, under an inclement sky, he will fall under the fatigue of his march: if we do not descend to the good order of the *poor*, by means of some other fear than that of the gallows, our resources in health, strength, skill, and power, will dry up.

That such a qualification may operate the more effectually, to keep the indigent out of the poor's-house, it might be adopted as a rule, though not a statute law.—

1. Not to spend above *three-pence-halfpenny* a-day on paupers in the article of food (*a*).—This is more than is spent, or necessary, to maintain many labouring people.

2. Those who are strong to eat, should be strong to work; and he who earns above *sixpence a-day*, might have a larger allowance; or a portion of it may be reserved for them, in order that they may be returned into the world so much the sooner.

3. Examine strictly who is fit for labour in a workhouse, or as an out-pensioner, that, if possible, a suitable task, agreeable to their abilities, be performed.

4. To appoint a trusty person or two, to the office of *inspector*; to discover the *real* state of those who petition for a weekly allowance, as *out-pensioners*.

This office is supposed to belong to the *overseers*, who, in great parishes, having so much work upon their hands, are seldom sufficiently attentive to it. Every one is subject to be imposed on: The art or falsehood of the petitioner on one side, and the compassion of the overseer on the other, helps many a deceiver. It still becomes a question, what work the party is capable of; and whether he will do any work, unless he is compelled by being *brought into the workhouse*?—The shortest decision is to *bring him*; but not always the most prudent; for the room should be left for him whose circumstances, from tender age, or hoary locks, sickness, or infirmity, admit of *no doubt*.

5. In

(*a*) I mean in *London* and *Westminster*: in the country it is estimated at $2d \frac{1}{2}$.

5. In all cases, the law must make it clear and definitive in whom the power of choice, and degree of charity, is vested.

6. Particular care should be taken of the register of paupers, agreeable to what I have already mentioned, distinguishing *males* and *females*; and making four or five classes of each, according to ages. This register should contain the following heads in marginal columns, viz. N^o—name—age—title to settlement—qualification (supposing the proposition I have made to take place)—trade or employment—relation or friend most capable to assist them—place of abode, if any—ability for work—disease, if any—prospects of relief by friends—if married, mark *m*.—number of children—by what accident rendered indigent—when admitted—when discharged.—Other marginal columns might contain the heads thought most proper, to complete the history of the *pauper* in a line or two. Under the *name* should stand, in the marginal column, if has had the small-pox, a *p*; if can read, an *r*; if capable of labour, a *c*; with space for some other particulars. The heads of all such registers should be done on royal paper, in copper-plate, otherwise the repetition of words, is a labour to the clerk, which he grows negligent of. The paper should be also ruled with 4 or 5 lines for each person to allow space, in each column.

Here I must observe, upon too good ground, that when such registers are made and kept, if nothing but the cover of the book is seen by those who are most interested to inspect it, they may as well give up their charge! Farewell.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXI.

THERE is another absurdity more palpable than any I have yet mentioned; and which breeds much mischief in the state of *police*. By the 7th of his present Majesty, which has operated so happily in the preservation of the infant parish poor, it is required that no person, within the parishes comprehended in the said act, shall be put out to serve apprentices beyond the age of twenty-one years. And no magistrate, or justice of the peace, or any man of common-sense, can conceive, that a carpenter or a smith, a wheelwright or a bricklayer, or the professor of any laborious or mechanical art, should in this forward and improved age, hold a young man or woman bound beyond these years. Yet, by a strange fatality attending our *police*, the common indentures of parish poor, must be made to serve to the age of twenty-four years, for no general alteration has yet taken place in the 43d of Queen *Elizabeth*, which requires such servitude. The act, 7th of his present Majesty, as confined to these cities, condemns this article in the ancient poor's law, declaring that it "prevents marriage, checks industry, and disturbs domestic peace." Would you think it possible, that after so strong and *public* a declaration, this clause in the 43 *Eliz.* should stand unrepealed?

The contests between master and apprentice, upon so unreasonable a servitude, are very frequent, and operate injuriously on the morals of both. People are wanted in the country more than they are here; and therefore there is a stronger reason for the general alteration of this part of Queen *Elizabeth's* act. The reason why the 7th of his present Majesty comprehended no more, is, that the grievance, with regard to the sad mortality of the *infant poor* being *local*, in order to obtain the act

without any dangerous opposition, the movers of it thought it impolitic to extend any clause beyond the local evil; but there is really no reason that I conceive, why the poor should not be all equally emancipated, in this instance. No general attempt to reform our poor laws has yet succeeded; but why this absurdity should remain, I know not.—If we amend this part only, the law will be so much the less imperfect. We may correct by detail, what we cannot rectify in the general view. If this is an obvious capital defect, reform it.—It is an object which I recommend to your very serious consideration, as one of the most necessary and strongest duties of common justice, in behalf of the poor.

I take for granted, that you, as a *justice of the peace*, have had numerous complaints before you, on account of this twenty-four years service. The usual way of accommodating such differences here, has been by recommending fidelity to the apprentice, and compassion to the master, to yield up a year or two. But why should the clause continue in force? The original design has been long since answered, and is now become as totally unnecessary, as the arts-masters of Bridewell-Hospital, of which it seems to be a companion. The apprenticeship to the age of twenty-four years, is indeed a kind of tax upon human misery, degrading the pauper three years beyond the period of life, at which our laws suppose every man qualified to be his own master, where great property is concerned: but those whose only property is the labour of their hands, should not be thus chained to the block.

As a legislator, you stand bound to see justice done between subject and subject: nor is it less evident, that in the same degree you establish *peace*, and a just œconomy, in order to promote moral rectitude, you will stop the gap at which so much disorder and rapine break in upon us. If you can do more in correcting the several defects of the law, so much the happier; but let not this any longer pass unnoticed. It is an evil which will not be attended with any controversy.

Farewell.

L E T T E R XXX.

WE come now to the consideration of That part of our *police*, in which we are the most dangerously deficient. It is universally acknowledged that our prisons, in their present state, with some few exceptions, are *schools for instruction in iniquity*. They are by no means sufficiently large, nor are properly divided in apartments, to accommodate such a number of prisoners as are sent to them:—That there are generally no divisions nor subdivisions, by which malefactors of the lowest, or highest degree; those who are sent to prison only for debt; or committed on suspicion of crimes of the most atrocious nature, can be separated, is confessed. In some cases, I believe, condemned persons are not divided from the rest of the prisoners; in others, the *condemned* do not enjoy the advantages of a private retreat from each other.—This is the case in most parts over the kingdom: I know it to be so in respect to our prisons in these cities. The remedy is obvious; but it will be attended with an expence, and therefore it is protracted, or evaded, insomuch that we hardly hear of any *intention* of rectifying an abuse of so capital a nature. We complain loudly of That which is the effect of this misconduct, and at the same time suffer our indolence and penurious neglect of police, to administer to the evil.—Good God! Are we *so far* guilty of the blood which we shed? I am bold in suggesting a thought, as if we were ourselves in any degree guilty of the very crimes committed against us, or the evils that follow them. But so it is: If we neglect the means of preventing the evil, it lies at our door. How can our conduct be reconciled, upon any principle of *judgment, justice or mercy?*

To investigate this object, it would be necessary to require an account of prisoners for *the last two years*.

1. That the Sheriffs of every county should give in an account of the dimensions of the several apartments in their respective prisons, in feet, length, breadth and height, and the uses they are put to.
2. The middle number of prisoners received into such apartments, according to the weekly reports, or any different short periods of time, when the number of prisoners is best known.
3. The greatest number of prisoners, at one time, during the two years.
4. How they were lodged, with respect to the quality of their offences.
5. The greatest number sick at one time.
6. The number committed, suspected of felony.
7. The number that died in prison.
8. The number acquitted for want of evidence.
9. The number pardoned.
10. The number hanged.
11. The amount of the county-rates, paid out of the parochial taxes, for the purposes of commitments, and other expences relative to their respective prisons, according to act of parliament.
12. What provision for change of garments for the prisoners.
13. What baths, for washing their bodies.
14. How often the prisoners change their linen.
15. What regulations exist with regard to diet.
16. If strong drink is permitted to be brought into the prison.
17. How the prisoners are attended by a *clergyman* for the *public worship*, and to discourse with them.

These, and such like questions, would lead to a thorough investigation of this object.—It is not to be presumed, that our common sense and humanity have forsaken us: and all the world will judge from the answers to such questions, supported by proper evidence, whether we are frightened by *phantoms* of our own brain, or that the evil is substantial and formidable. From hence we may be led to con-

sider what the remedy may be. If a total or partial change in the mode of punishing be necessary, we must decide what the change shall consist in: *Indecision* is one of the greatest curses that can attend a nation. We may then conclude, that the mode most agreeable to the complexion of our laws, and the humanity of our disposition, will claim the preference. It may at the same time be necessary to find a remedy which will be terrible to offenders. If death, in the degree now inflicted as a punishment, does not intimidate the *profligate*, and our *humanity* and *policy* restrain us from exerting the full rigour of our laws as they now stand, in putting greater numbers to death: if banishment is found to be impolitic, and ineffectual: if mercy, by acquittance, is prostituted: if the vulgar adage, "save a thief from the gallows, and he will cut your throat," is verified, in almost as many instances as there are commitments to *Newgate*, or discharges at the *Old Bailey*: if these things are so, we are to consider of the method most probable to restore malefactors to a use of their *reason*, and a knowledge of their *religion*. The argument being reduced to this issue; the question arising is, *what is the best method* for this purpose? When this is well digested, carry it with vigour into execution.

We all agree, that *labour by compulsion* is necessary: Some are for having malefactors led about in *chains*, to work; others, for labour in confinement; but neither one nor the other, seem to consider what human nature is, with respect to *evil communication*; nor, consequently, how inefficacious every method must be, which congregates felons. In what a dreadful situation would That *poor man* be, who, penetrated with a conviction of his crimes, and deeply sensible of the gratitude he owes his country, for his life, wishing to render it useful, and no less, to make his peace with heaven, if under a notion of mercy, and pretending to exercise our policy and humanity, we oblige such person to pass a number of years with the most abandoned reprobates! Shall we not be guilty of equal folly and injustice? The good thief upon the cross, could make no impression on his companion, even at the point of death: can our supposed penitent malefactor succeed in his wishes, to make others like himself, whilst they are in *bad company*? It is obvious, that the reprobates will make no impression on each other

to

to their advantage, so as to render them fit to be trusted again in the world, and become good subjects. If they are supposed utterly incapable of being rendered such, is there any policy, humanity, or religion, in saving them from the gallows? Tho' we were to hang ten times as many as now fall victims to *justice*, we should, in that case, commit no offence against God or our country.

But we mean to preserve our fellow subjects, and can this be done without striking them with *terror*? If we cannot prevent such dreadful calamities, and deter the ill-inclined, by the force of the punishment of criminals, we shall do nothing. Whether this terror will operate strongest upon others when prisoners are known to be in *solitary* confinement, tho' *not seen*, is a question which this argument naturally leads to. For my own part, I have often thought, and am steady in my opinion, founded upon several very strong facts, which I shall mention, that *solitary imprisonment* is the most *terrible*, and I am equally convinced it is the most humane, religious, efficacious method, that can be adopted. I never read an account of malefactors *hanged* or *transported*, without thinking of this doctrine of *imprisonment in solitude*, as the most probable method to spread the terror of the laws, and the resentments of the people against *criminals*: I should rather say, against the *crimes*, for which they are condemned; meaning, if possible, to preserve the *criminal*, that justice and mercy may, in the language of the sacred writings, meet and kiss each other.

When I consider the nature and causes of offences, I am penetrated with conviction, that a much less imperfect harmony might reign with regard to the great attributes of the Deity, *mercy* and *justice*, as practicable under human legislatures; for however incomprehensible the distinction, *so far as* the divine perfections are imitable by men, the greatest glory in all their actions, must be to keep those attributes in view!

Let us consider for a moment the vulgar adage, "*opportunity* makes the thief;" and if this operates stronger than *bad principles*, we know that *evil communication* is stronger than both. And therefore, in the reason of things, a considerable part of the punishment should fall on the

parent

parent or master, who has been negligent; and another portion of it, on ourselves for not providing proper laws. Many masters are careless with respect to the temptation they throw in the way of their servants, without taking the least pains to enquire what kind of principles they have to restrain them. Frugality is a virtue which modern wealth disdains. We do not "lock up our silver nor gold, nor hedge round our possessions," as some of our more prudent ancestors have been wont to do: and if we are at the same time negligent with respect to the religious obligations of our dependents; can the event be fortunate? Without regard to any comparative views, which are of no use in morals, and serve only to flatter and reconcile us to wickedness, if even our prisons lose their terror, and death itself is scorned, there is much cause to believe, we are to blame in our conduct towards our inferiors.

It is not to be conceived, but that many criminals are much less perverse than they are vulgarly imagined to be: and there is good reason to apprehend many are rendered desperate by an injudicious treatment, which militates so fatally against our own peace and security.

How is a malefactor to be brought to a true sense of his duty to God and society? We say, that our laws suppose a man innocent, till he is proved to be guilty; but our practice is diametrically opposite to this principle: we proceed to punish him immediately. Can any man of common sense say, it is no punishment to a man of the least sentiment, to be conducted to a prison, and there compelled to associate with the most atrocious offenders? I will be bold to say, this is a cruel and unjust procedure! And whence doth it arise? I will tell you: It arises from a cause as politically evil as the crimes we mean to punish, a profuse, luxurious, vicious manner of living, which makes us tenacious of the necessary supplies for police, and leavens our conduct throughout from the highest to the lowest. We behold the dreadful effects, which a trifling sum might remedy; trifling, compared to our numerous unnecessary expences. This wears the face of gripping avarice, where we should be most generous and liberal. Even prodigality would receive a lustre from the motive, where the good of men's souls and bodies are

so deeply concerned. Malefactors do not learn the arts of villainy, out of resentment of our manner of treating them; but our manner of treating them, makes them proficient in the arts of villainy.

If intemperance and immorality have so far effaced the impressions of good and evil, on the minds of these unhappy men, that some new mode of correction is become necessary, we must strive to bring them back to the consideration that they are *accountable beings*! The gallows keeps many in awe; more, I believe, than is generally imagined; and if *all* were hanged, who by law have forfeited their lives, *justice* would not walk so unrevengeed amongst us. The common notion differs from this opinion, and it is so far *happy*, if any method can be devised which wears the face of *mercy*. Instead of sixty or seventy men now annually executed in these cities, the number might then amount to some hundreds.

Our humanity revolts against such rigour: we do not chuse to imitate the conduct of the celebrated Pope at *Rome*.—To say our laws are *good*, and at the same time decline the execution of them, is opposing a principle of *humanity*, to a principle of *justice*: it is doing *evil*, that *good* may come of it, tho' experience proves the event does not justify it. Our laws are certainly not *good*, if they cannot be executed without making the remedy worse than the disease. If of two evils it is the least to break the law; then the law, if good in itself abstractedly, and in the nature of things, for a *virtuous people*, it is bad for *us*.

As the case now stands, if seventy fall every year; in the course of ten years seven hundred of our youth are offered up as victims at the altar of justice, in these cities only! The number is but *one* person in *nine thousand* of the inhabitants; but let us go a little deeper in the investigation of the object, and see how many it amounts to upon the *males*, and of the ages of eighteen to twenty-five. In this view, it appears to cut off, in ten years, a regiment of armed men, who might be our defenders, instead of hostile invaders: and how many regiments are we deprived of by transportation? How many escape condemnation thro' the tenderness of the evidence; the *quirks* which are countenanced by lawyers, as a part of their trade; and the humanity of judges and juries; all proving that our laws are too severe. And what is the consequence?

A relaxation of the severity of laws establishes the evil we complain of. The number of malefactors pardoned by the royal clemency; with those who return from transportation,—to follow the same course of life, makes the aggregate sum lost, very formidable!

We have talked of late, of some new mode of punishment as necessary. What it *can be*, consistent with our genius and humanity, the mild and lenient complexion of our laws, and the glorious liberty we enjoy, is the question.—The judges are already authorized by parliament, to imprison, for a time not less than *six* months, nor greater than *two years*; but how are they to exercise this authority, if there are *no proper prisons*, in which malefactors can be *safely confined*; or indeed any prisons but such as are necessary for what I call the *current service*, this being imperfectly performed, as I have already mentioned?

My idea is a *limited imprisonment*, according to the crime, and the circumstances attending it; not congregating a number, to add a virulence to their mental disease, and *poison the remedy*; but by a strict separation and solitude, cutting the prisoner off from all means of evil by communication. By this I conceive much good will be done: With proper assistance, it must open a new scene.—This is the pith and marrow of the plan which my zeal prompts me to recommend to your correction.

Prisoners may enjoy all the advantages of relief to their minds, which the exercise of such mechanic arts, or other cleanly labour, as themselves may chuse, can afford: nor should the common bounties of *nature* be withheld, with respect to cleanliness and sweet air, with as much room for motion or exercise, and such occasional warmth, as shall contribute to the preservation of their health. But still *solitude* and *confinement* should be their doom, for such a duration of years as the law directs; a latitude being given the judge, to remit *time*, from year to year, according as the prisoner may behave. I am confident, that this would *break* their ferocity of disposition, *reform* their illiterate infidelity; and *change* their sensual enjoyments, purchased at the hazard of their lives, for a manly, reasonable, and religious conduct.

I do not mean that no man should be put to death; for "he that spilleth man's blood, by man shall his blood be spilt:" And the giving a stab to credit in a commercial country, which deprives others of the means of *living*, may be also considered as *murder*.

The tenderness of our laws should still preserve their native hue, and the tincture of that pure religion and humanity by which they are characterized. The solitary prisoner enjoying the common bounties of *nature*, with regard to the preservation of his life, should have all the benefits and advantages of *grace*, as far as the most judicious and best chosen clergyman can be instrumental. The prisoner should be daily visited, and religious admonition, and spiritual comfort, given him; that learning what it is to be a *man* and a *christian*, the great end and design of the confinement may be answered. This might mitigate the terror of such imprisonment; but it would still retain enough to *awe* the prisoner into the fear of That Being, of whose existence, in the days of his *abandoned profligacy*, he may have doubted, merely from being kept in a hurry and flutter of mind, and an incapacity of the lowest degree of *consideration*.

What sort of *county-prison* for *punishment in solitude* will contain a great number of prisoners? It must enclose a great compass of ground, and be attended with a considerable expence: but you must likewise allow the evil to be very formidable, and that it calls for all the succour we can afford. Suppose such a prison were to contain above two hundred cells; it would operate potently on the minds and manners of the people, even whilst it should be yet in the hands of the mason and bricklayer. Many would consider it intended as a prison for life. The terrors of a temporary solitude would frighten others; and the firmness and energy of government, of which it would be an expression, might convince the most abandoned, that we were awakened from the supineness, which gives birth to rapine, and cherishes violence. Thus we should cease to behold the blood of so many citizens shed for want of a *regular police*.—As to *building*, it furnishes labour; many of those very people, who might otherwise become thieves themselves, or their families be

supported by a parochial tax, will be employed. We are not aware how false parsimony brings distress on a nation! A local county tax for such a building, to be rendered the wonder and protector of ages to come, were it to cost 100,000*l.* without funding it, would not be above 3*per* 1000*per annum* on our expences for 4 years. The charges of the people are daily increasing, for watches and patrols, nails and bars, chains, and plates of iron; but these will never cure the evil, nor prevent it. I reckon that we spend full 8 millions in the county of Middlesex, and that 3*per* thousand is 24,000*l.* Consider the importance of the object!—If we reduce every thing to the standard of pecuniary computation, reckon the cost of what I have already mentioned, with the addition of an apparatus for defence on the road, and the losses we are all subject to. Every one complains of losses by some kind of robbery. *Thievery* is become familiar, in a degree that is shocking!—Do not your wife and daughters occasionally suffer in their health, by terror? And what shall we say of the value of your son's life, when disdaining to submit to a highwayman, he is perchance shot through the body?—You submit to heavy taxes in war, to beat down stone walls, or do something as ineffectual to the happiness of your country: will you do nothing towards promoting domestic peace and security? Your servant, if not your son, may not improbably stand in the ranks to be shot at, in the place of the man, who by false parsimony, in not providing proper prisons for his correction, has been hanged. Your best powdered footman may stand equally bound, to contribute his share to save his countryman, his friend, or his brother servant. The *postillion* was hanged. Poor fellow! he was connected with a wretched harlot!—he might have been saved, with a little *solitary correction*!

To go higher in proof of the solidity of the proposal, in point of *political arithmetic*, I will venture to maintain, that a man from the age of fifteen to thirty-eight, (the medium duration of life and labour) is worth at least 200*l.* I am persuaded of this, from the analogy of our expence, and the price of our labour. Supposing fifty persons annually put to death in these cities, and fifty more only in the whole kingdom, who might be saved, it amounts in thirty years to 3000, which at

200*l.*

2007. is 600,000/. Multiply this five times for the number of *transports*, and it is 3,000,000/. Add to this the mischief created by an army of enemies, lurking in the bowels of your country, harrassing and distressing the people, subverting peace and salutary government. We efface our humanity, by a habit of the carnage of our fellow-creatures; and yet we cannot go into the street with a coat unbuttoned, without having the hand of a *thief*, in the pocket of it. Good God! Can we suffer all this, in order to prevent such an expence! It may be much less; but I mean that the object should not be starved.

Am I arguing as if I were *sure* of the event?—I leave it to your own good sense and discernment, whether the *trial* ought not to be made, at least in *Middlesex*, where I have computed half the mischief to be done. The evil may become so general, that these cities and their environs will not comprehend a *quarter* part of the devastation committed. Nor will it avail, that we check the progress by a temporary exertion: If we were to engage half the thieves in the kingdom to catch the other half, till by degrees only *one* remained; whilst our plan of profuse expence, amusement, ignorance of religion, and careless living remained, an army of thieves would soon start up again.

In the beginning of the reign of his late Majesty, after a peace of 14 years, robberies and murders were arrived to so enormous a height, it was thought proper to make proclamation of an extraordinary reward for apprehending malefactors (a): and according to the accounts which were

(a) By the KING.

A P R O C L A M A T I O N.

For discovering and apprehending persons guilty of any murder or robbery in the streets of *London* and *Westminster*, or in any street or highway within five miles of the same.

GEORGE R.

“WHEREAS we have received information, that frequent robberies have of late been committed with open force and violence upon our good subjects passing and re-
“passing in the public streets, and other roads, in or near our cities of *London* and *West-*
“*minster*, to the great annoyance of our peaceful subjects, and in defiance of our laws,
“which provide severe punishments against such offenders: We being firmly resolved to

were given, this pecuniary reward, as it encouraged people to hazard their lives in taking thieves, it intimidated robbers, and answered the intention. This afforded a temporary relief from the painful fit, but by no means obtained a radical cure of the disease.

Upon the comparative view of That period of time, with the present, I fear we have increased the number of our offences, in proportion to the number of our resorts of *expensive amusement*; and I will add, the *infidelity* of the vulgar. Most certain it is, our *thieves* are improved in the *science* of robbery, and the quality of their adventures; witness their passion for *plate* and such valuables; and their daring insolence in breaking into houses, where they have reason to believe any considerable booty is to be found.

In
 “ exert our royal care for the preservation of the persons and properties of our loving
 “ subjects, and to put an effectual stop to all such abominable practices, have thought fit,
 “ with the advice of our privy-council, to issue this our royal proclamation; and for the
 “ encouragement of all persons to be diligent in endeavouring to discover and apprehend
 “ all such offenders, do hereby promise and declare, that any person or persons who shall
 “ discover and apprehend any offender who hath at any time, within three months last
 “ past, committed, or hereafter shall commit any murder whatsoever, or any robbery, with
 “ open force and violence in any street, or other highway, or road, in our cities of *London*
 “ or *Westminster*, or within five miles round the same, so as such offender be convicted of
 “ the said offences, or any of them, shall have and receive for every such offender so ap-
 “ prehended and convicted as aforesaid, the sum of one hundred pounds sterling, over and
 “ above all other rewards, to which such person or persons may by an act of parliament
 “ be entitled: which said sum of one hundred pounds for every offender so apprehended and
 “ convicted, as aforesaid, the commissioners of our treasury, or our high-treasurer of *Great-*
 “ *Britain*, for the time being, are hereby directed and required to pay accordingly, without
 “ any further or other warrant in that behalf: and if the person so discovering and appre-
 “ hending any offender guilty of any such murder or robbery, as aforesaid, (except the
 “ person actually giving a wound in any such murder) shall have been an accomplice in
 “ any such murder or robbery, and by reason thereof shall stand in need of our most gracious
 “ pardon, we do hereby further promise and declare, that such person shall have our most
 “ gracious pardon. And we do hereby strictly charge and command all our justices of the
 “ peace, and all other our officers whatsoever, that they do use their utmost diligence and
 “ endeavours, in their several places and stations, to find out, discover, and apprehend any
 “ such offenders, upon pain of our high displeasure.”

Given at our court of St. James's the 29th day of February 1727-8, and in the first year
 of our reign.

God save the KING.

In whatever view we consider the proposition, there seems to be abundant testimony of the propriety and necessity of keeping prisoners separated. If it is meant to support the dignity of our laws, and the sanctity of our religion, this seems to be the only safe way. If the malefactor be a very bad man, it is a right measure with regard to him as well as others: if he be not a *bad* one, though unfortunately in the hands of justice, it is a mercy due to him not to distress and degrade him, by forcing him into the worst company.

Whether we build *prisons* in order to restore the morality and religion of the people, or *churches* in which they are to worship God; the object is the same: and to all appearance, the repentance and amendment, the sorrow for the past, and the resolution with regard to the future part of life, will be more sincere in the *prison*, than in the *church*.

If I am not misinformed, it was about the year 1750, that an act of parliament was modelled and digested, and even passed the *Commons*, for the purpose of punishing malefactors, who had forfeited their lives, by obliging them to perform hard labour in chains, in dock-yards and other public places. This bill was thrown out by the *Lords*, probably on the conviction, that the execution of it would be attended with such dangers and difficulties, as would render it a very improper experiment. It cannot be presumed that persons of such spirits as our malefactors usually are, could be restrained without an armed force: they would necessarily communicate with each other: and that this would be attended with pernicious consequences, is not very difficult to conceive. For my own part, I apprehend, that such a punishment is not calculated for this *meridian of liberty*; that it would be displeasing to our humanity; and that the evil it might do, and the terror such malefactors might create, would militate against the peace and satisfaction of the people. — Let the experiment of *solitary imprisonment* be fairly tried, and I will venture my reputation on the success, that for one which the gallows and transportation are now instrumental in preserving to his country, at least a dozen shall be restored to the benevolent arms of their common parent, and become entitled to her protection. As the case now stands, the sore infection of morals in our
prisons

prisons is such, one would imagine from the event, that all who enter them, are bound by a solemn compact, to do as much mischief as they can, as long as they shall draw the vital air. Thus are all the ends of mercy, as well as justice, defeated! What numbers being acquitted return to the same course! How should it be otherwise? They have learned to do nothing for themselves; their understandings are not improved by any instruction; their hearts are not purified by any abstinence: evil communication has reigned in full triumph: every circumstance has combined to render them the same foolish, perverse, iniquitous creatures they were before!

In the new institution of the imprisonment proposed, it is intended that the prisoners shall not even hear the names of each other, much less be personally known. This will give an equal terror and dignity to the confinement, whilst it provides for the prisoner himself when he shall be restored to the world. In this view, reason and experience unite in favour of the plan.

The same reason which holds for the punishment of the condemned, operates as potently to prevent the evil communication before they come to trial; and it proves, that we have a general want of prisons, so spacious, well divided, and secure, as to answer the great end in view. If we mean to do our business, not slovenly and by halves; if we are in earnest with God, and intend to preserve our country, proper prisons, independent of this grand scene of solitude, which I recommend as a punishment, should be provided. Every county should furnish the means of its own safety; and to some it will cost but little.

With regard to the punishment proposed, try the experiment in *Middlesex*: if we can seize upon the citadel, the town will soon surrender. Before the prison for such condemned malefactors can be finished, the *Newgate* now building will probably be completed; but whether there are such separations in it as will contribute to the grand design in question, to send forth prisoners less criminal than when they came within the walls, remains to be proved.

Novelty is the idol of a great part of mankind; but so serious an object as a solitary confinement, for a length of time, could not fail of making a deep impression of awe on the minds of the people in general. This is what we stand in much need of. It is not to be imagined it could be without its portion of imperfection in the execution; but from the nature of it, and the conveniences provided, it would probably be much better guarded than any thing of the kind yet known amongst us. It must be a corporal punishable offence, to permit the least communication of one prisoner with another.

The malefactors not being seen, would they be forgotten, and the imprisonment rendered ineffectual as an object of terror to those who are in danger of offending? — Reason and experience seem to justify the opinion, that this prison would prove what it is really intended to be; something preparatory to the proper life, and death of a man, as a Being accountable to divine and human laws. A malefactor put to death in the ordinary way of execution, is no object of terror, but to him who attends the execution; and this ceases with the day, for when the man is dead, the natural conclusion is, “all men die!” On the other hand, I apprehend, the most distant view of such a prison-house, whilst it gave confidence in the security of life and property to the good subject, it would strike the evil-minded with such terror, as might happily keep it empty; which would be the glory of the plan!

You find my reasoning goes upon a principle, that man is a *reasoning, as well as a passionate creature*: the prisoner's reflexion on having escaped with his life, though some may disdain the condition, will be comfortable: the prison will appear to the majority, as intended to render life useful to themselves, and beneficial to society. The prisoner will not only have time to *consider*, but also to exercise his hands in the means of living. Reflection cannot lose all its power; nor can the heart of man be so petrified, but the consideration of his immortal part, under the afflicting hand of Heaven, and the terrors of solitude, will open his mind. He will feel his situation as an intermediate state between both worlds, and as a preparative for either. When released,

the remembrance of *such* imprisonment will never be effaced : he will not go into the same temptations, from the consideration of his being exposed to the same punishment ; probably with some more terrifying circumstances, with respect to *time*, or a horrible dungeon. — It may be proper to make distinctions of the higher and lower cells ; as the former will present a prospect of the *country* round : I say country, for such a prison should be on an eminence, at some little distance from a great city or town.

So far as there is a necessity for an alteration in punishment, and this scheme promises success, it is eligible. In our present situation, we do not live in any safety. I inherit, or acquire a fortune, and take my pleasure : I sup with my friend ; I cannot return to my home, not even in my chariot, without danger of a pistol being clapt to my breast. I build an elegant *villa*, ten or twenty miles distant from the capital : I am obliged to provide an armed force to convoy me thither, lest I should be attacked on the road with fire and ball. It is a heavy tax on my liberty. A gentleman in *England* would rather see the devil come into his house than an *exciseman* ; and yet such man, might come in broad day, with great civility, and require a *legal tax*, which if not paid in this way, must necessarily be levied in some other. But what shall we say of him who is invaded in a hostile manner in the dead of night, by armed men, come to *plunder*, and to murder, if resisted ; or perhaps if not resisted ?

Custom may render accidents of this kind familiar to us, but neither *Turk* nor *Persian* suffer such wrongs : they are not in so *abject a state*. We enjoy the pleasure of calling ourselves a *free people* ; but this violence verges to the worst kind of slavery. I have lived, during a great part of my life, under the most despotic governments of *Europe* and *Asia* ; yet *free* from violence, and the *dread* of robbery, either in my house, or travelling on the road, actual *rebellion* excepted. — Here I am not so happy : the caution with which it is necessary to live, is the heaviest tax I ever paid in any country. Unless we conquer this spirit of rapine and murder, co-operating with a general impatience of controul, farewell to government, farewell to our laws,

laws, on which we found our glorious constitution. — Our liberty will become a laughing stock to the nations. The *acknowledgment*, that we do not live without fear of violence, is a confession that we do live in a state of slavery. It is so capital a defect in our government, it tarnishes its brightest lustre. It mocks the favourite principle we adopt, and tells us, “you know not what humanity means!”

In this light things appear to me, who do not mean to *find fault* where there is none; but to lament the *real evil*. With regard to the impressions which may be received of the plan proposed, the smallest degree of common sense, will lead the people to comprehend, that not only their comfort and security are intended, but that it is also meant to preserve such persons from the gallows as have usually been the ordinary victims to justice. It must appear to every one that this punishment hath not answered the purpose for which it are intended: it does not intimidate others from committing the same crimes: The number condemned to transportation is not lessened: many return with a halter about their necks: and as to those who receive mercy, or have been discharged through a defect of evidence, they generally follow the same trade; and after committing murder or robberies of many kinds, are at length offered up as victims at the altar of justice.

Let the opulent and the indigent, the nobleman and the commoner, think seriously how to change the mode of punishing; and try if it can be rendered effectual. We mean to live in safety, and possess our souls in tranquility, as the reward of virtue, and salutary laws: but how is the tender father or the fond mother, the son or daughter, to live free from alarms, whilst they see there is not sufficient energy in government, to prevent the dreadful calamities to which they are hourly exposed, by night and day.

Let us suppose it *agreed*, that imprisonment and labour are the true substitutes for *hanging* and *transportation*: That of *imprisonment*, the *solitary* is the only safe kind; and of *labour*, the most serviceable to the public and the prisoner, is the exercise of mechanic arts. Where these are wanting, *spinning* and *knitting* may come in aid, or something that

is cleanly. Whatever will mend the condition of the prisoner, and encourage him to work on in the same way when he returns into the world, will be the best.

With regard to *solitude*, the objections which I have heard made against it, are really of no weight. First, *would you have imprisonment within imprisonment?* This seems to be a mere shadow of an objection, for all prisoners are locked up in some apartments independent of the *outer-gates*. The cells which I have mentioned for petty delinquents in *Totbill-Fields* and *Clerkenwell* prisons,—what are they, but prisons within prisons?

It hath been often wished by the thinking part of mankind, that all the prisoners in *Newgate* were lodged separately. The more atrocious the criminal, the greater the necessity of preventing his communicating with other prisoners; but as there have been, on some occasions, *three hundred malefactors*, at the same time, in prison, the design has been laid aside as impracticable. In the construction of the present *New Newgate* I fear there is a capital defect, in its not being more lofty, and not having a sufficient number of apartments. Thus we go on in direct opposition to our experience!

The *other* reason given against solitary imprisonment wears a graver aspect, but is equally light in the balance. This is the horror of a solitary confinement, which might drive the prisoner to *suicide*.—What does this amount to? In common life, retirement is often the best friend to virtue, and prevents the extravagance which ends in suicide. The father who enjoined his son, by his *will*, to be alone one hour every day, meant that he should repent of his follies past, and learn how to live for the future.—We know of no instance of perpetrating suicide in prisons, except to prevent the ignominy of a *public execution*. Let us be consistent: we mean not to *play the fool*, but to do justice and shew mercy. The petty delinquents whom I have mentioned in their respective cells, were not suffered to see any body except their parents, who might come to visit them, but by particular order from the justices (a). If I were condemned

(a) See pages 78, 79.

condemned to be hanged, and my sentence changed to a temporary imprisonment, if books, pen, ink and paper were supplied, I should not want *company*; and tho' "man was not made to be alone," I should prefer solitude to the hazard of a bad companion: the devil within me, might be less dangerous than when strengthened by many demoniacs. What has been the fortune of *state prisoners*, and many others of superior condition? How have *they* supported their confinement? The thoughts of an inferior man, are often more supportable to him, than those of persons of a higher class: at least we find much the greater number of *suicides* among people of distinction. The labour of the hands furnishing a fund of entertainment and relief to the mind, it often renders common life, under the acutest indigence, preferable to the greatest affluence. The *prisoner*, upon the plan I propose, will not only daily see his *providitor* for his *animal* sustenance, but likewise the *messenger from heaven*, in the person of the clergyman who is also to attend him daily, and assist him in arranging his thoughts, giving rest to his soul, and filling him with hopes of joyful days, provided he will seek for them by the only means they are to be found; the intention being to bring him to a right sense of his condition, and from an *enemy*, to convert him to a *friend* of social life. If we mean to conform to the *Christian law*, and make our *policy* and *religion* harmonize, what plan can be more consistent? Some have objections to the *terrible* part; others comprehend the punishment to be too lenient. As to the *employment*, it should be agreeable to the true end of labour: That which will be most useful to the prisoner, returned into the world, and most profitable during his confinement, claims the preference.

The servants of the house should be persons bred to mechanic arts, and engaged to instruct such of the prisoners as may be proper. This would be an additional relief to some, for an hour or two in a day; the plan being the more consistent, in the most essential part, as both prisoner and public would be gainers. To render the punishment subservient to no end, but *terror*, is but half the work: it is intended to *preserve the prisoner*; and restore him to the world with impressions of religion and social love on his mind. We may also suppose he will *teach* the

lessons he has *learnt* in prison; these being of a direct contrary nature to such as are taught, in consequence of the usual diabolical communication of malefactors. How few who have been in the habit of *theft* and *rapine*, and discharged from prison, prosper long under the empire of *thievery*, before they are brought back again to their confinement! We may presume it had been happy for them, had they been kept in *solitude*. The fact is, that instead of learning mechanic arts in prison, or the means of getting *honest* bread, they serve a kind of regular apprenticeship, or *finish* their education in all the mysteries of villainy and rapine. Instead of resolving to labour, and answer the great end of their existence, with respect to the hopes of a blissful immortality, their imprisonment seems to confirm their infidelity, and plunges them the deeper into all the distresses of iniquity.

In regard to the nature of this *solitary imprisonment*, persons guilty of smaller crimes, or concerned in unfortunate connections, which the laws condemn to death, or transportation,—here the line may be drawn with the most judicious and merciful precision, by making the imprisonment of little duration! The same may be done in commiseration of the *first offence*; the characters of offenders; the occasion; the temptation; the variety of circumstances attending the crime and the criminal; with the probability of his becoming a good subject: these being weighed by *justice*, in an equal balance, the unavoidable defects of law may be corrected.

The accommodations should be calculated to preserve the prisoner's life; and the freedom of access, to the *providitor* of food; the spiritual comforter; and the master of the prison. Till the *clergyman* becomes acquainted with the prisoner, he may be attended by the *providitor*. If it is thought necessary, there may be a railed partition, or iron grate, in all the cells, as a double security against any violence: supposing a man capable of offering any violence, by word or deed, to his friend who so apparently means his good. The fear of the dungeon would keep him in awe.

To give impressions of the advantages of *industry*, and to encourage the prisoner to behave well, it might improve the plan, if his aliment were

were mended in quality in proportion to his gain by his labour; for altho' this would take off part of the sting of the punishment, it would be counterpoised by the habit of industry acquired during his confinement; and he might practice the trade of an *honest man*, and find it more profitable and secure, than the business of a *thief*. If some part of the produce of his labour were also reserved for him when he should be discharged, it would be a means of preventing the temptation to return to his former evil course. This plan would afford a *gentleman keeper*, and the *clergymen*, continual opportunities of conference, how to preserve the prisoners, and make them good men and good subjects.

As many of the prisoners may be incapable of learning mechanic arts, tho' expert in the labour of the garden; and the health of others may require to be occasionally in the open air; one side of the declivity of the hill, for at least a quarter of a mile square, may be made into garden ground, with an additional high wall, well armed with iron—This quarter of a mile square will contain 40 acres of ground (*a*), which subdivided by walls into sixty or eighty parts (*b*), some of the prisoners would work in gardening, still *suffering solitude*—Some might take it by turns—The indulgence of walking for an hour or two in these detached inclosures, should be also granted for *good behaviour*. These divisions must be so contrived, that no prisoner shall see another: a patrol shall attend to keep an eye on the prisoners within their several inclosures; and another guard be kept without it;—Each division might contain a small *shed* or pavilion, that if health required, the prisoner might sit down, and be protected from the sun or rain.

In these divisions some of the prisoners shall be assigned the task of gardening, and the value of each one's labour (deducting the supposed rent of the land) be regularly carried to his credit—The solitude must still be observed—Some might garden by turns, as far as could be made consistent with

(*a*) A mile square is 640 acres, $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile square 160 acres, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile square 40 acres.

(*b*) A square acre being near 70 yards on each side: allowing for a wall of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a yard, each of the 80 divisions might be sufficient, or by an expence of a greater compass of wall, and a safe guard, it might be more extensive.

with the account of the gain—Gardening partaking the most of liberty, might also be considered as the slightest punishment. He who earned in gardening, or by any other means, above a shilling a day, might have half the overplus added to his ordinary diet, *but no spirituous liquors to be allowed.*

The indulgence of walking in these detached inclosures might be also granted as a reward for good behaviour.—

Many of the lesser regulations, depending on the good behaviour of the prisoners, might be left in the power of the head keeper.—He must take his rounds at least twice a week, with the clerk, and minute down the prisoners *complaints*, and his own *observations*, that good order be preserved. This would be another short break in their solitude, demonstrative of the strict justice and *tendernefs* intended to be exercised.

We must argue upon this principle, that the *proudest* spirit may be humbled; and the most profligate reformed. True self-love, founded in a sense of moral duty, supported by the lenient arts of persuasion, and blended with *rigid* discipline, will bring every person, who is not *insane*, to what we vulgarly call his *right mind*. I remember an instance of a notorious malefactor, some years before the law for proceeding to sentence upon evidence, who would not *plead*. It was then a question, whether he should be brought to the *press*; but the jailor privately recommended to the magistrates, to try solitary confinement in prison. This produced the effect he predicted, for in less than twenty-four hours, this daring artful felon, chose rather to hold up his hand at the bar, and quietly submit his neck to the halter, than remain in such a *solitary* state. You will observe, this expedient was recommended by the *prison-keeper*, who knew of what kind of stuff the hearts of our thieves are made. In discoursing with some of the most intelligent justices of the peace, I find the solitary imprisonment of refractory apprentices, and such petty offenders, confined in *Clerkenwell-Bridewell*, is attended with the most happy effects that can be imagined. They are soon humbled to the dust.

In regard to the nature of the building, I can only give you an idea of the outline, in which I may be easily corrected. I compute that a square
of

of about 250 feet in each front, would accommodate 208 persons. I suppose the *cells*, as we will call them, to be 14 feet clear in front, and 20 to 25 deep, and 14 in height. Four stories of such distinct cells, with proper partition-walls of stone, would constitute a front of 52 cells; in all 208. I suppose none of these *prison cells* below the surface of the earth. These apartments should be arched, and the floors, sides, and ceilings of stucco.—The bedsteads, should be iron, painted green.—The furniture of the room such as may be deemed proper to preserve life. This should be provided by the *county*, and nothing introduced at the will, or charge of the prisoner.—I speak of *bedsteads*, meaning to give the prisoner such refreshment as will preserve him in health, and convince him of the mercy intended.

Whether the building be a *square*, or *rotunda*, the same accommodation may be made. There must be a wall round it of 15 or 20 feet high, at the distance of about 20 or 30 feet, within which inclosure no person to be admitted. Without this, a guard may be appointed to take his rounds night and day. Here should be a space, of at least 100 or 150 feet, inclosed by another wall of 25 to 30 feet high, formidably armed with iron, that the *passenger* who beholds it may be struck with awe; as well as the cells rendered the more secure. Between the two grand walls may stand the offices, as the *kitchen*, *brewhouse*, *bakehouse*, and *laundry*; a genteel house for the keeper, or head officer; houses for the clergymen, apothecaries, surgeons, and proper attendance. None of these to have any external views, or communication, below the height of the grand wall.—Without this should be another lower wall at a distance, to keep off such as may attempt to carry on a correspondence.

In the centre of the prison shall be a *handsome chapel*, the light to come in chiefly towards the top; the same being higher than the prison. This chapel should contain as many closets as the cells, with which they are to communicate. The prisoner attending divine service every day, the closets must be so contrived that he may hear and see the clergyman, whilst a *double grate* prevented his seeing any other person. If the chapel were 150 to 200 feet diameter of floor, there would remain a passage from the cells, full 40 to 50 feet in length; these may be 5 or

6 feet broad, and 7 or 8 high, with light in the sides, from the vacant part of the *area* round the chapel. Under the chapel should be dungeons, ready to receive such as may be refractory, noisy, turbulent and ferocious, as a punishment, there to be allowed only bread and water, till the next Quarter Session, when they should be reported, and the keeper directed how he should treat such persons. To keep the greater awe and silence, and prevent visitors as much as may be, no coach or wheel carriage shall come within the gates.

The keeper should be a man of the best character and of a liberal education, of a grave and religious turn, and never to be absent from home at night. He must give ample security, and be allowed a gentleman's salary. The clerk of the prison should be also a respectable person. He must be under the direction of the *head keeper*, and keep a very fair register, in a book, on royal paper, ruled in marginal columns, leaving at least a distance of six lines for each prisoner. The titles of the columns, for ease and regularity, to be printed from copper-plate, viz. N^o—Name.—If he has had the small-pox, *p*.—If inoculated in the prison, *i*.—If married, *m*.—If a widower, *w*.—If he has children, *c*, and the number of them. *With such other necessary particulars as can be easily expressed in figures or letters, to stand under the name.*—Number of years condemned to imprisonment.—Years remitted, and when.—Of what trade or business he has been.—In what he is employed in prison.—His progress.—If learning, under instruction.—What he gains a day by computation. *This column may comprehend his improvements from year to year, or other shorter time.*—His apparent sense of religion, viz. if he can read, *r*.—if he has learnt the prayers recommended to him by the clergyman, *p*, &c.—*With regard to that part of the christian worship, consisting of the administration of the Lord's Supper, this would not be so frequent, but that the clergyman might do it in private, when he had brought his ward to a right sense of it; which should be his grand object.*—How often he received in the quarter.—The sum his goods sold for, every six months labour. *The particulars of this to be in a separate book.*—Time when discharged.—

The

The great art in the contrivance of this building, will be not only to prevent every kind of communication of the prisoners, but to facilitate the *clergymen* and *providitors* attendance on their duty at certain stated hours, with *constancy* and *exactness*, no one to have more prisoners in his department than he can properly attend.

The *clergymen* should be chosen by the *bishop*, who would be cautious of his own honour, that the duty be well performed; and such *clergymen* should be well paid, that their ministry may be honoured.

Discourses suitable to the circumstances of the prisoners should be well digested, and examined by at least two *bishops*, as to the propriety of them, before they are brought into use. Being printed in a volume or two, the prisoners should be supplied with such books. They should likewise have a moral tract fitted to their circumstances, to qualify them to live peaceably in the world. They may have a third book written expressly for their use, explaining the principles, and giving instructions in the several mechanic arts and labours, which may be in practice in the prison.

There should be, without the walls, a house consisting of two or three large rooms, where the produce of every man's labour might be put up to sale every six months; and the clerk of the prison (giving security for his trust) should account for the produce. The several lots sold, being distinguished by *numbers* corresponding with the respective cells, the fair produce of the work of every prisoner will be known.

This would be attended with a further advantage: it would furnish matter of consideration, if the prisoner professing a mechanic art, would be able to live in the world. I have seen a plan for the relief of those who are acquitted at the *Old Bailey*, that they may not, thro' the prejudices of mankind, perish for want of employment in their former occupations; but it went no higher than a *subscription*.

This prison will require a body of respectable visitors to enquire into the conduct of the prisoners, and of the officers who attend them. By examining the register as described, they would easily judge.

As to the time of imprisonment, if we follow the *Hollanders*, in a plan of a similar nature, it must be for 7, 14, 21, or 99 years. This is their practice; and they oblige the prisoner to work till he has repaid the value stolen. It would be difficult for us in some cases to make restitution for a quarter part of the mischief committed by malefactors; the circumstances of *robberies* sometimes aggravate the crime, more than the value of the thing stolen.—In the *United Provinces*, the magistrate according to the behaviour of the prisoner, and the prospect of his becoming useful to society, from time to time remits a number of years; so that 7 may perchance be reduced to 2 or 3; 14 to 3 or 4; 21 to 6 or 7; and 99 to 9 or 10. So I presume it might be with us, as a means of encouraging the penitent thief to reconcile himself to God and his country. The number of years for which malefactors may be condemned to this solitude, and the motives for alleviating the rigour of the sentence, are not the chief difficulties: I hope at all events, you will think the idea worthy your close pursuit.

I have estimated the expence at a hazard, and paid for the building as a legacy to posterity, not involving your children in debt; for this would be a kind of robbery of them, for the suppression of robbers. The practice of borrowing on all occasions, is the principal cause of our *public* and *private* misfortunes. It has its good effects; but it is blended with a thousand bad ones: We feel it on this occasion, when a mighty nation starts at the difficulty of raising money for so important a purpose. Is this the produce of love for posterity?

You see upon what principle the plan is founded, how it is intended to blend *mercy* and *justice*, to work a reformation on the foundation of rewards and punishments in a temporal state; with no less a regard to eternity.—There is one circumstance which I have omitted to mention: Compassion prompts me to consider, how provision may be made for warmth in the extremity of winter: I am not sure but the cells may be guarded against cold, by the closeness of windows and doors, warm clothing, and such motion as the situation of the prisoners may admit of: But at all events, the whole building may be rendered

warm by coppers or boilers, the steam being communicated by pipes. The importance of the object is too great to be frustrated by any difficulty, within the reach of art and contrivance.

You are sensible of the present pernicious effects with regard to our prisoners. If such a prison as I have given the outlines of, were in use for malefactors before they are brought to their trial, and a space of time of two or three months given them, to try what impressions can be made on their minds; and likewise by what means they might get their bread honestly; it would give a different colour to their characters. The evidence of clergymen, properly appointed to attend them, might reflect a national glory: For tho' the prisoners could not be supposed to confess their crimes, those who might be acquitted, would not only be free from infection of morals in prison, but also learn their duty to God, and their neighbour, which perchance they never were taught.—Such is the tenderness of our laws, that the judge having an impartial regard to the evidence, is advocate for, not against the prisoner. Many are acquitted: some few, as having little or no guilt: many more thro' the defect, or tenderness of evidence, tho' standing in need of much correction.

In our usual method, it must be acknowledged that gross injustice to the public is often committed, by little thieves being taught how to become proficient in the dark iniquity of their dreadful occupation. It cannot be too often remarked that our present plan is as cruel as it is impolitic, and may well make a civilized nation blush.—I would not be understood, that prisoners before their trial, should be kept with the rigour of those who are condemned; there might be a certain hour for certain cells, in which real parents, or a solicitor, might be admitted to see the prisoners; a due search being first made, with regard to spirituous liquors, and contrivances for escape. Farewell.

L E T T E R XXIII.

I Have said much upon the difficulty I apprehend, with regard to the sum necessary for the undertaking I recommended in my last; but I demonstrate how much we should be gainers in the issue. The desire of money, and ideas of *pleasure*; the insensibility of the miseries to which fellow-subjects are exposed; and the forgetfulness of the dangers, themselves have gone through, may prove more than a counterbalance to all the arguments I have urged, till *coercive power* steps in to our aid, to prove how much our interest is concerned to pay a small addition to our poor's rates. I suppose 8 or 10 per cent on such rates would annually raise near £.20,000 in these cities and their environs. This sum, five times told, would complete the building; and such a work would require 5 or 6 years at least to accomplish. The tax being in the hands of the parishes, it would cease of course when the work should be finished.

But it is not merely the building such a prison or two in a county, according to the exigency, but the necessity of *maintaining it*, with other articles of *police*. For this, parliament may think it consistent to come in aid of the poorer part of the people, by a local tax, for a local benefit; and in such case no object could be so proper as our *public diversions*, to which we may impute many of the robberies and disorders committed. If the tax were levied upon all entertainments; such as the higher classes of the people frequent, it might in one view be the most consistent; as 5 out of £.1000, may be less burthen some than 1 out of £.100; and those who have the most property to lose, should be the most anxious to guard it from violence.

I calculate that the receipts for our diversions are not less than £.150,000 *per annum*; and if we include the multitude of *public feasts* or *communities*, which should be comprehended, it might add £.20,000 more, to be taxed. Ten per cent. ought not to be deemed an heavy burthen, in lieu of That which ought otherwise to be paid in some other shape: and

supposing the masters of such places of diversion, being free to hold them, or give them up, were to add ten per cent. on the price of them; those who usually frequent them, are likewise left to their choice, whether they will go, or not.

The four capital theatres of this metropolis, and others of a lesser note; the grand public concerts, balls, and masquerades; the morning breakfast places, and evening rendezvous; the billiard-rooms, tennis-courts, skittle-grounds, and variety of diversions, of which I hardly know the names, are plentiful sources of funds for *police*. If these were taxed, and the produce appropriated to such a purpose, it might redound to the honour of the legislators of this kingdom, and the relief of the subject. If it checks the growth of such public diversions, it would operate to the removal of the evil. But I apprehend the people of these cities would not act as the citizens of *Marseilles* did in 1753. I was at that time in *Paris*, where it was a subject of discourse. The master of the comedians, by favour of the Count *St. Florentine*, under whose department it fell, raised the price a tenth or fifteenth part higher than it used to be, but not for any *public use*. The citizens revolted; they would not go to the play: The Count was displeased, and threatened to remove the comedians: The citizens made answer, "that the actors were not necessary in a *commercial* town; that they had done well without them for many years, and saw no reason why they should not do as well, were they deprived of this amusement:" and at length, as well as I remember, the master of the theatre was obliged to submit.—In the case I propose, I apprehend that the spectator would pay the ten per cent. with pleasure, provided so much was really accounted for, from the consideration of enjoying his amusement with the greater security; and where thousands, and tens of thousands, of young men and old men, and young women and old women lounge about, seeking diversion as beggars seek their bread, we may venture to conclude, that *diversions* will bear a tax.

That a fund will be wanted for the support of such prisons, as I have mentioned, and the regulation of the *police* in general, cannot be doubted. We have hitherto trifled with ourselves: we pay heavy taxes, and see the evil increase upon us. The work which is done by an active magistrate or two, in the suppression of robberies, proves what *may* be

be done. But so vast a multitude of people, requires a regular division for the ends of *police*. Upon our present plan, it is not manageable.—Divide the inhabitants into four parts, under four principal justices, each would have above 150,000 persons in his department. If each of these were allowed five, or *six* hundred pounds *per annum*, it would encourage them to do the duty.—If under these we had four subordinate justices, all active, and men of abilities, at four hundred pounds each *per annum*, there would still be a *subdivision* of 30,000 people to guard.—If under each of the five, were two trusty officers, as first and second *head-constable*; and subordinate to these, six able under constables of approved courage and conduct, to be chosen under a check as to their abilities; by such a regulation, the number of inhabitants might be compassed, and this monster of a town so far reduced to 6 or 7000 people under the inspection of a regular body of *police*. I mean this independent of the parishes, which being near 150, the *quality of the inhabitants* may be easily traced out, tho' some parishes contain ten times more than others. It is more than possible to know every inhabitant, and how he lives.

I have thus made a charge of 6 or £.7000 *per annum*. Is *this* an object of consideration compared to the safety of the lives and properties of the inhabitants? Does it not give employment to a number of good subjects, and awe the *bad* ones? If any justice of the peace would act as honorary, not as an established salary officer, he might attend the board of justices, provided he would be responsible for what he undertook; otherwise such justices are but a mere name; they strike no terror; they are not even known to be justices, and make police a subject of laughter.—Every magistrate, upon a regular appointed salary, should bear a badge of his office, hung by a ribbon, from a button-hole on his breast; not only that being known, notice might be communicated to him of irregularities; but that he might be respected as a *guardian of the police*.

If a proper fund or income were raised, it would afford a means of rewarding those who were concerned in apprehending thieves (a).

These

(a) There is such a fund in my own parish, and four house-breakers have been taken within two months.

These should be called *pursuers*, not thief-catchers, the last name being rather contemptible. Besides the ordinary premiums, when any of these distinguished themselves, during the year; there should be a sum divided to the families of men who might suffer by wounds or death, in resisting thieves, or in taking them.—Could such a plan be established, we might make a truce with *robbers*, till we had convinced them how much better it would be to change their profession, and live in peace.

This letter has carried me beyond the bounds I meant to prescribe myself, but it is a serious epistle.—I have only to add, that what renders our situation the more grievous, is the expensiveness of prosecutions, the attendance which is necessary, and the loss of time; so that the tables are often turned on the innocent person, in favour of the *thief*. I have heard of a working-man obliged to attend three days to prosecute a pick-pocket, and afterwards to pay the charges.—In the *United Provinces*, the *Schout*, or master of the police, in every great town, prosecutes at the charge of the *state*: He is the principal officer, and has proper officers under him. When he appears, it is with distinction in exterior shew; and he is honoured and respected. We, who refine more, are for *substance* rather than parade; but we often refine away the substance, even of the justice which we mean to exercise. When the *Dutch* convict a thief, he is branded on the back, and consequently subject to be at any time discovered to have trespassed. How far *we* should approve of this kind of severity, or what real advantage it would be of, I leave to your consideration. Farewell.

P. S. Since I finished my letter, I have been thinking how the prisoners are to communicate with the garden-ground (a). It seems as if this might be done by subterraneous passages, and that such ground must lie on two or three sides of the building, or it would be extremely difficult to convey the prisoner to it, or reconduct him to his *cell*, without being seen by more than his guard. This part will require the ingenuity of a skilful architect: and it would be better to have no such garden, than no such prison.—I am also of opinion, that on three sides of the building, no person should be admitted between the two walls (b), except the guard. I have seen a state prison in *France* ill-contrived, where a *guard* was fixt at a corner which no one was permitted to pass. The prisoners used looking-glasses, by holding of which out of the windows or iron grate, by reflexion they saw the persons who were standing or passing at the corner.

(a) Page 229.

(b) 231.

L E T T E R XXIV.

ALL the christian world is ready to acknowledge, that he must be a savage, who can behold with indifference, a fellow-creature suffering death under the hands of the executioner. Granting that excepting a few instances, nothing is sooner forgotten than the death of our neighbour; yet is nothing in human society more sacred than the life of a man. It is our unhappiness often to refine away our good sense and policy: we hardly recollect how necessary it is to keep the world in awe by exterior solemnities: and the giddiness of the multitude is apt to convert every event, out of the daily track of life, into an occasion of dissipation; so that the object which should make the deepest impression, even with regard to the immortality of the soul, serves for little more than to amuse the senses. I fear there are some, who every year lose at least 9, out of 300 working days, in going to see a poor wretch hanged by the neck, without profiting by this dreadful scene, in regard to their own follies or sins. Others, whose turn it may to swing, are no less fond of this *spectacle*. The indecent manner of conducting our executions, has often been a subject of wonder and complaint: perhaps we may introduce more serious fashions, were it only for the love of variety. It is not without pleasure, I read the detail now lying before me.—“The behaviour of the prisoners yesterday morning in the press-yard, was extremely resigned, penitent, and devout. The procession to the place of execution was *unusually* solemn; *even the mob* appeared to be impressed with the exemplary behaviour of the culprits, five of whom were assiduously engaged in devotion, while the other appeared stupified with grief. Several persons of *Merritt's* acquaintance spoke to him, for the last time, as he passed up *Holborn*. The two *under-sheriffs* preceded the first cart, and the *sheriffs* followed the second, *all in mourning*.”

To

To this account is added an *interesting* reflexion. "It is impossible for a man of humane feelings to view a procession to the public place of execution, without being inspired with a wish to *prevent* the necessity of exhibiting such horrid spectacles. There is surely more merit in saving one member of society from destruction, than in punishing an hundred." The news-writer's correspondent then proceeds. "This duty lies very much with our *parish officers*, to whom are entrusted, in a great degree, the morals of the lower ranks of people." I presume he might have said, *parish schools*: he then observes — "Perhaps the confining all parish children within the limits of the *school*, except when they go abroad with the master, might be attended with good effects; and if the persons to whom these children are apprenticed, would carefully superintend their morals, we should have less reason to complain of the sanguinary complexion of our laws." — This last suggestion is very much to be *wished* for, but little to be *expected*, upon our present plan of police. I have good reason to believe there is scarce an *apprentice boy*, turned of fifteen years of age, who, contrary to the practice of our forefathers, is not suffered to go abroad almost every night, as soon as the shop is shut. These boys, and young men, challenge it as a kind of *right*; and if the master is as dissipated as his servant, which is often the case, he takes no thought, till he finds himself *robbed*; which I believe happens much oftener than he discovers. You will easily conceive it next to impossible the apprentice should wander abroad, without learning to drink strong liquors: some go further, and game: many keep bad company: the society of each other is dangerous. They neglect their Bible, and have as little relish for a Common-Prayer-Book. Numbers become a prey to prostitutes, and accelerate their ruin. Vice is costly: money must be supplied, let it come from what quarter it may. I do not say this at a venture; in many instances I know it to be true; in others I am well informed it is so. From this cause, amongst others, we see and feel the devastation of the morals of the common people: and *what will be the end* of a neglect of such sober customs, as constitute a material part of police?

As a specimen of the ferocity of the vulgar, I am sorry to add the sequel of the article which I have mentioned. "After the prisoners had

passed *Hatton-Garden*, the crowd pressed up that street, and a gentleman being on horseback, on the foot-path, the mob resented it, beat the horse, and the rider was thrown and his skull fractured."—To prevent such accidents, is no easy task; but the more solemn the procession, one would imagine the quieter would the people be. When they are noisy, the sheriff should harangue them, and be ready with *band-bills* well digested; such as compassion, piety, and good-sense may suggest, on so mournful an occasion. A great part of our ferocity arises from a mean opinion of each other: for mobs may be led to do *right* things, as well as *wrong* ones.

You perceive from the instance I have quoted, there are some exceptions to the common practice, with regard to the contrition of malefactors: and it would constantly be with them, as with the rest of mankind: the tenderness of the heart, and the degree of consciousness of offences, would be apparent; but that the use of strong drink, and evil communication, buoy them up, and harden their hearts, insomuch that were they pardoned under the gallows, we should find them robbing, perhaps the very next day. The unhappiness of our criminals is such, with regard to our *execrable* impolicy, they are hardened by imprisonment. Where sorrow and repentance only should reign, we find a very different spirit. Instead of learning how to die, under a consciousness that their crimes deserve death, and endeavouring to support the character of *penitents*, on the verge of a new existence; many of them scarce give any proof of their belief in the immortality of the soul: they consider death only as the cessation of motion. It is true they are anxious that their bodies may not be *otamized*, as they call it; and we accordingly find their acquaintance sometimes interpose, in a riotous manner, to rescue the body from the hands of the officer.

If we consider the present state of religion among the lower classes of the people, there is nothing wonderful in this: we must not be surprized at any proof of ignorance and depravity. Among the spectators of executions, there is generally a considerable number of reprobate young fellows, whose only reflexion on hanging, is "*a wry face, and a watery pair of breeches.*" If they bring themselves into the hands

hands of justice, they use all possible means to save themselves from the arms of the king of terrors; but they know not what to do with their lives when they are spared. Such are the effects of our customs, manners, and neglect of police!

To see a miserable being, in a civilized *christian* nation, shew a light behaviour on this tremendous occasion, or to hear the reflexions of others, in a real, or pretended contempt of death, upon no principle of religion, or the love of virtue, must be extremely shocking to every heart susceptible of any generous impression. If the infliction of the punishment of death is necessary, it should be performed with as much decency as possible; and if it were rendered more awful to the spectator, would it not prove an occasion of greater sorrow, that the crimes of men render it necessary? An expression of tranquillity arising from hope; and the effect of thought, inspired by the manly and devout discourses of the clergyman, may fill the mind with an inexpressible satisfaction, in seeing the debt of nature paid gracefully, though it were on the gallows. Those who attend executions, entertaining no such thoughts, may be awed by their senses, and the exterior pomp and solemnity of an execution.

Upon this principle, I recommend to your serious consideration to establish some rule of conduct, different from what has been hitherto in practice; but it must not be lamely performed. I propose

1. Every prisoner shall be carried separately, in a mourning coach, and attended by a divine to the place of execution. If so many men are to die, *twenty coaches* would do better than *two carts*. We find a considerable difference in common life between an address applied immediately to ourselves, and that which is spoken to a number of other persons. It is also very easy to conceive, that the mind would find relief by opening itself, and discovering its offences, where there is only two persons together, than by talking to a number, when the reply of one man interrupts that of another, in the awful moment, when the labours of the thoughts can least bear interruption. *It is hard upon human nature*, that so small a boon should not be granted, at a moment when all the compassion of the soul is called forth, to shew the utmost

indulgence! The vulgar answer, that they ought to be ready for death before this hour, or it will signify but little; is cruel, if not impious: how can *we* tell, what it will signify? We are sure that it signifies much to shew respect to the distressed, and support the honour due to our nature, under all circumstances.

Though the zeal of poor clergymen may induce them to attend prisoners under these abject and humiliating circumstances, it is treating them in a manner unworthy the dignity of their office, to seat them *in a cart*, to ride open and exposed, as if *they* too were criminals. If one malefactor is so great a reprobate, as even to ridicule what the clergyman says, which I apprehend sometimes happens—Good God!—what a horrible situation do we put the poor man in, together with the penitent criminals!

The ignominy with which it might be intended the *cart* shall brand the malefactor, is as absurd an idea, as to suppose a man indifferent whether he is hanged or not, provided he can ride in a coach. The intention is to awe the populace. Our conduct has rather a contrary effect: but if it had not, can we with propriety make our religion subservient to our policy, where a man's soul is in question? But it is evident, in this instance, that neither religion nor policy has any share: nor do we exercise the compassion due to our fellow-creature, who is going to death, and to make ample retribution for his crimes. In this view, more respect is due, than to the death-bed of many a sinner, attended with all the pomp and pride of wealth and heraldry. The charge of a coach cannot exceed 10 shillings for each prisoner.

As a further aid, I propose,

2. That the sheriffs, and their deputies the undersheriffs, attending on horseback, shall have their *footmen* to accompany them, all clothed in black, with their hats uncocked. At present I believe the *mourning* is left entirely to their own pleasure. There is no *regulation* for this purpose.

3. The

3. The constables, and other civil officers, with ensigns peculiar to the occasion, shall walk on foot, in a uniform of dark blue, or other garb of distinction, on the sides of the coaches; and, if the occasion requires it, entreat the mob "*to suffer the poor malefactors to die in peace!*"

4. There shall be a building erected, in form of a stage, with the gallows upon it. On this stage there shall be a partition, with a door to pass through, so that one sufferer may not see the agonies of his companion in death. The most decent execution of one man at a time, may be performed in a minute or two, by tying a cord hard round his neck, in case any life should remain; and then put him into his coffin, to be ready for the purpose.

5. The execution shall be performed by the criminal standing on a block, which running on castors, may be easily slid from under him. — Some order of this kind might support a much higher degree of dignity than driving off a cart, to leave half a dozen *men* hanging by the neck, with as little decency, as if they were so many *dogs*.

6. The *clergymen*, attended by the *sheriffs* and *constables*, shall see to the interment of the *malefactors*, in graves prepared for the purpose; except when the sentence orders their being *anatomized*. — The indecent parade of throwing about a human body, is shocking even to *barbarians*, except when they mean to cut it up, and *eat* it. As to the friends of the parties, whoever they are, they must submit to the laws; and in ordinary cases, the surgeons have sufficient subjects for their speculation in hospitals, which, as to *diseases*, are more proper.

7. To complete this design, there must be a *burial-ground* contiguous to the stage (*a*), such ground to be strongly walled in, and the mob not permitted to obstruct the funeral rites, according to the direction in the *Liturgy*. Custom would bring this into familiar use; and even *mobs* learn *reason*, where there can be no motive to inflame any passion, but such as is of the tender kind.

8. The burial-place should be on the side of a road, near the entrance into a great city, such as Tyburn, to be called the *malefactors' burial*.

(*a*) It would be right that the erection should be built with stone, as a standing monument of mortality to evil doers.

burial-place; and the entrance of it to be distinguished by the emblems of *justice* and *mortality*, to attract the eye of the beholder.

I am persuaded such a disposition would be honourable to the nation, and very profitable to our police, and the safety and tranquillity of the subject. It could not fail of making some impression on the minds of those who are most likely to fall into the hands of justice. Our present mode is ferocious, characteristical of the nation in no respect that is honourable, or productive of That seriousness, without which a people will become contemptible in their own eyes, as well as in the esteem of foreigners.

Every thing that can contribute to the solemnity of the procession, the contrition of the malefactor, and the promotion of sincerity in repentance, with regard to sin in general, and the honour of a civilized nation, should be considered as obligations by no means to be departed from. The expence, in this case, could be no object, compared to the importance of the design: The hanging of a dog requires decency. The putting a man to death by the halter, makes no difference from the ax: in the great view of the life of man, both should be performed with the same external awe, though not with the same expence. Both pay the debt to justice, and make atonement to the world. Both ought to be considered, not only as we are *men*, but *christians*. "Let them die—but in their death remember they are men," is a sentence the poet puts into the mouth of a *beutben*. We owe this to our reputation as an intelligent nation: it is due to our humanity, and our religion, the purity of which we boast of. All customs, as well as laws, ought to have a reference to the character and sentiments of a people: and what *character* can we be supposed to have, were we to judge only from the exterior part of our conduct in executions? We are apt to refer all to the *populace*, as if they were under no discipline: The iron throat of a mob may be softened: all men have passions: To beg for *silence*, not to offend the prisoner in the hour of death, is but a small request! Humour the multitude properly, and any thing that is good, may be done. *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R XXV.

THE first object to keep mankind in peace and good order, is *useful industry*. We find our sister island, though in a less improved state in arts and manufactures, has made great efforts towards the accomplishment of this end (a); and, happily for the strength of the *British commercial empire*, it has in a great measure succeeded. She stands

(a) The *Dublin Society* for promoting husbandry and other useful arts, begun its operations about the year 1731. It published letters in the news-papers, desiring gentlemen and others to communicate to it, such practices and improvements as they found most useful, in any part of husbandry or manufactures. Such as answered best, were produced and laid before the public, with an exact account of the instruments and methods made use of. These were rewarded as far as the fund would allow, which was only a moidore each subscriber, *per annum*. After some time, this was found incompetent to so national an object: and this being represented, fresh application was made in 1740, and many persons of distinction subscribed from a moidore, to 10*l.* which brought in an ample supply.

1. The society imported several machines from *England* and *Holland*, and encouraged the use of them: by these means it is possessed of a great variety of models and instruments at large, in its repositories.

2. It published *treatises* on hops, and saffron, for raising flax seed, and draining bogs.

3. It has published weekly, in the news-papers, observations on several articles of husbandry and mechanic arts; and republished them in one volume, under the title of *The Observations of the DUBLIN SOCIETY*.

4. It took a field, near *Great-Britain-street*, where it planted hops, madder, saffron, cyder-trees, sainfoin, and lucern, in order to shew the manner of propagating these several important articles.

This corresponds with the idea I formed of having a spot of ground divided into squares, to exercise the labour and skill of boys at school, that seeing the productions of nature in the most useful manner, they might take the advantage of it.

5. Finding the ordinary subscriptions insufficient, the *Dublin Society* promoted a subscription for giving premiums, in which it was greatly assisted by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Madden; not only by his soliciting many to subscribe, but by his own example, in giving between 2 and

300*l.*

stands most in need of aid: we want a spur, not in arts and manufactures, not in splendor and ornament, but in the *increase* of tillage, for the

300*l.* a year in premiums. Many lords and gentlemen entered into this new subscription, by which the society was enabled to give encouragement to many branches of husbandry and manufactures. This raised a great and general spirit of emulation. It encouraged *many*; and more was done in one year, in the article of husbandry, than could be expected or imagined to be performed by any single person in a number of years.

Many tradesmen were induced to exert their utmost skill in making their respective manufactures in the best manner, in hopes of getting *premiums*, and recommend them to the public; and these generally advertised, where the *premium goods* were to be sold.

Encouraged by the success of this method, the society extended the premiums to many articles of husbandry and manufactures.

6. For reclaiming the greatest quantity of unprofitable bogs, and coarse mountains.
 7. For manuring the greatest number of acres with lime, limestone, gravel, marle, and sea sand.
 8. For raising most timber trees, apple-trees, copses for hops, and hop-poles.
 9. For planting the greatest number of acres with hops.
 10. For the best and greatest quantity of hops.
 11. For sowing the largest quantity of artificial grass-seeds, and common hay-seeds.
 12. For saving most grass-seeds.
 13. For sowing the largest quantity of turnip-seeds.
 14. For sowing and raising most wheat and flat barley.
 15. For sowing most wheat before *October*.
 16. For using most oxen in ploughing.
 17. For the best barrel of wheat, barley, malt, &c.
- The manufactures which it endeavoured to improve are these:
18. It distributed premiums to those who dyed blacks and scarlets in the best manner.
 19. To those who gathered linen rags for making paper, for the mills near *Dublin, Belfast,* and *Limerick*, in proportion to the value gathered by them.
 20. For making the best writing and printing paper.
 21. For erecting paper-mills.
 22. For making the best velvets — tapestry — fustians — beaver hats, for clergymen — and for laymens use.
 23. For making the most salt.
 24. For making the most pearl-barley.
 25. For taking and curing the most sea fish.
 26. For making the best earthen and potters ware.
 27. For making the best types for printers.
 28. For the best cyder and ale.
 29. For making fine blankets.
 30. For the best drawings and designs by boys.

31. For

the purpose of supporting that part of the people, who for want of good order, are not properly furnished with the means of living. There are not people enough in the field, who may see their own food rise out of

31. For the best pattern for damask and drapers.
32. For the best and greatest quantity of spun wool.
33. For the best and greatest quantity of spun flax, the long way of the staple.
34. For teaching children to spin the same way.
35. For making the best bone lace, edgings, and *Dresden* works.
36. For the best imitation of lace, and work wrought in shades with the needle.
37. For the best plans of houses, from two to eight rooms on a floor.
38. For making the best ploughs, harrows, and winnows for corn.
39. For the best mills for grinding and pressing apples.
40. For raising the best flax and flax-feed.

Premiums were also given for promoting several branches of the linen manufacture.

On proper occasions extraordinary bounties or premiums were given, viz.

50*l.* to Mr. *John Roche*, to carry on the hardware manufacture.

100*l.* to *Henry M^cCleary*, for his invention of a new method of making damask linen, with less expence and furniture than the old manner required.

Many persons have applied to the society for rewards for their inventions and improvements. In such cases the society directed, that several experiments should be made; and if they answer well, it never failed to give some reward.

When the proposer of these inventions or improvements, could not afford the expence of such experiments, the society ordered them to be made at its own cost; and published an account of the success in the news-paper, with the author's name, and place of abode.

These were the methods this society took, to promote husbandry and arts in *Ireland*, where the lower people are wedded to their old customs, and generally so poor, they dare not venture on any new improvements or methods, without some assurance of reward for the risk they run.

The best designs for the public service, not supported by a regular tax, soon languish. When the spirit which gave birth to the enterprize ceases, the life of the object is in danger of ceasing also. This was the case of the *Dublin Society*; for notwithstanding the just application of their fund, and the visible benefits that accrued to the public, in 1745 the premium fund sunk considerably. This reduced the society to the necessity of lessening the number and value of their premiums.

Such was the state of things when the Earl of *Chesterfield* arrived, as Lord-Lieutenant of the kingdom. He procured his Majesty's gracious letter for granting to the society, on the establishment, a bounty of 500*l.* a year, during his royal pleasure, to be applied to the same

of the earth, watered by the sweat of their own brows. This hath given our poor a dainty taste, and poisoned the very fountain of frugality. To offer premiums for those who shew the most common sense and virtue, would be a difficult undertaking. The reward must be in the man's own breast, who cherishes the poor, as they ought to be cherished; and shews them an example which they ought to follow, to possess them with right notions of duty to God, their parents, their children, and themselves; and to see those notions reduced to practice. The mode of living is an art, or at least a science, which religion and good laws teach; but example only can render it familiar. If you give premiums, let the first be

1. To him who produces the most children alive, out of a dozen born.
2. To him who produces most children between 6 and 12 years old, who can gain at least 3d. a day each.
3. To him who is second in degree of gain by labour.
4. To him who is third in degree of gain by labour.
5. To the father or mother of those children who appear cleanest, and are most constant in the worship of God, on the sabbath-day.

If these were visited by yourself, your wife, or daughters, and smiled on by the vicar or his curate, you might see the poor smile in their turn.

6. Give another premium to him whose wife or daughter cooks his aliment, and makes it go the farthest, so as to feel the less want: That is, in effect, to those who produce the best receipts for cookery, and furnish their table with good aliment, at the cheapest rate.

If
uses and purposes, with its own voluntary subscriptions. His lordship some time after gave 100l. The royal bounty, instead of lessening, increased the subscriptions, for many gentlemen gave the more liberally, which enabled the society to proceed. In 1747, the late Sir Richard Lewing devised to it by will, the interest of 2000l. for twenty-one years, to be applied towards promoting husbandry and other arts in this kingdom. This bequest, and many more expected to be given for the same purposes, induced the society to apply to his Excellency the Earl of Harrington to intercede with his Majesty to grant his royal charter for an incorporation, to enable it the better to receive benefactions; which passed in due form in April 1750.—It is now some years since the parliament of Ireland has befriended this useful institution, and granted it certain duties on some small articles, as cards, dice, &c.; besides certain specific grants, from two as far as six thousand pounds at a time, as the calls on the society for improvement in objects of national use might require.

If such people were countenanced by some peculiar favour, we might see more healthy and contented faces; especially if their necessities, from the largeness of a family, should require more than common exertions. A well-timed and judicious distribution of premiums, may answer great and good purposes, to animate people to find out the way to get their own bread; but having found it, they should no longer expect more than the value of their labour, especially in a country bursting as it were with affluence, which would be the case of this island, were our police well regulated.—Among the several premiums given by our Society in London, for promoting arts, manufactures and commerce, or by the Dublin Society, you will find some, for your peculiar speculation, to advance skill and industry amongst your own villagers, who may thus exert a spirit which they never shewed before.

Upon article 25 of the *Dublin premiums*, I observe with pleasure, from the public accounts, that the fisheries of Ireland are now under the consideration of the *British* parliament: and whether it regards her own coast, *Greenland*, or *Newfoundland*, for her own, or foreign consumption, it is a very important object. It may open a door for other improvements, and promote the national advantage and felicity, to prevent the migration of subjects.

Idleness is confessedly the parent of wickedness. If all mankind were to consider what their several relative duties consist in, with respect to God, themselves, and their neighbour, and endeavour to practise them, the longest life would appear very short; and no time would hang heavy on their hands. The learned and wealthy would give instruction to preserve the poor and needy; and these would follow it, in order to preserve themselves.

To come nearer home: we have done great things of late years in the improvement of these cities; but not without the attention of parliament. Wealth has prompted many to seek elegance and convenience, and skill has enabled us to find them: insomuch that a *British* subject, who has not seen these ancient cities of *London* and *Westminster* for forty years, would scarce know them again.

The country, in many parts, has been no less improved. In almost every quarter we find the hand of skill and industry. But our object at present should be to consider of the best means of removing people from town to the country, that every part may appear with propriety; the town not crowded, nor the country in want of the number it could support in health, peace, and comfort. If numbers, now idle in London, were transplanted into the country, instead of living by *thievery*, we might see many a desert tract smiling in corn and pasture. Upon this principle, in all places, where any improvement is made, there should be a suitable provision for a certain number of subjects; not barely for their sustenance, but also their comfort and convenience; so that they may provide for themselves, or be liable to *reproach*, if not *punishment*. Improvements which have no *direct* tendency to prevent poverty, and consequently the nuisance of *common beggars*, but only to enrich the possessors of the land, may in one view be considered as a sumptuous building, which pleases the fancy, but whose covering is not altogether sufficient to guard against the inclemency of the skies.

With respect to the quantity and quality of our houses in these cities, so far as they are in an airy, convenient, and healthy situation, I behold them with complacency, as every class of the people, at all events, may hereafter remove from a bad house to a good one. If through any evil accident some should move off; or by the alteration of our *modes* and *fashions*, any great number of people, like the most celebrated heroes of antiquity, prefer a *rural life*, with the addition of the divine philanthropy of making their dependants happy, upon the solid grounds of social and religious principles; as they could not carry their houses with them, they would contribute to the public welfare, by leaving to others, more space, less difficulty in obtaining *necessaries*, and more comfort. Thus while they provided for their villagers, to render them flourishing, the town would receive a treble benefit.

When I take my walks, and view the many narrow streets, close alleys, confined tenements, and *tumbling houses* yet remaining in these cities, I deplore the fate of those who are so far excluded from the enjoyment of the bounties of Heaven. Such as do not breathe the sweet air, but are huddled

Buddled together in great numbers, often poison each other. I have discoursed with many persons who have had from eight to a dozen children, two or three of them only being alive: some have buried the whole dozen. A part of this evil I have carried to the account of poverty and want, and the use of spiritous liquors; but the greater portion of it to the places where they lived.

The excess which affluence creates, is more apt to destroy mankind, than the aliment which falls to the share of the poor. There are many, who, if they had nothing to eat or drink but bread and water, these being truly good of their kind, they might see more days, than under their present indulgences. If poverty be attended with gross ignorance, too hard labour, or sordid idleness, many more perish.

In considering things in a comparative view, I observe, the children born of parents in easy circumstances, inhabiting good houses, not too closely surrounded, live nearly in the proportion of children born in the country, under the same circumstances. The sulphur of sea coal, though it is not injurious to many adults, often cuts the thread of life in infants. I believe we shall generally find, that children are best preserved in houses situated on the highest ground, and where the apartments are the least confined.

Upon a question with relation to the *Foundling-Hospital*, during the period of the indiscriminate reception, a gentleman of my acquaintance examined the mortality of ten villages, in ten different counties, making in the whole an hundred: he found the medium of the mortality to be but 13 per cent. under 2 years of age. What are the deaths at these ages in these cities?—30 or 40 per cent.!—The bills give us 16 to 17,000 born,—and 8000 dying under two years of age! The cause of this mortality I have in a great measure demonstrated. It amounts to no proof of diminution in our numbers in general; but, very contrary to what we find in *Paris*, and other great cities in *Europe*, *London* and *Westminster* contribute nothing to the stock of the nation. To investigate this object, not only with respect to the vitality, but also the morals of the people, I propose to your consideration to call for these particulars, viz.

1. The number of married persons in each parish.
2. The number of children dying in each parish under 12 months old.
3. Number dying in each parish, between 12 months and 2 years.
4. Number of children who have lost their fathers by death.
5. Number whose fathers have left them.
6. Number who have neither father nor mother.
7. The streets and lanes, or other parts of the parish, where the mortality is found to be the greatest.
8. As the parish officers, in conjunction with the *parochial clergy*, should have it in charge, as part of their duty, to see the children of the poor taught to *sew, spin, read, and learn* the duties of religion; these officers should be also charged with the care of *recommending inoculation*, as the means of preserving children.

Were the parishes to unite for building an hospital for inoculation, or to agree with the governors of the inoculation hospital already built, numbers might be preserved, who now *perish* (a). By the present regulations, infants cannot be admitted into the *Inoculating-Hospital*, on account of the expence, and the want of sufficient room; so that numbers are lost, through this defect in our *police*: The poor, at the most proper age for inoculation, are absolutely shut out of this means of preserving life; and confirmed in their thoughtlessness. *Inoculation* among us is in a higher reputation than with any other nation; and therefore, to act with consistency, we should take the advantage of it, in the most effectual and rational manner.

If this object were referred to that hospital, and the *parishes* obliged to pay a certain sum, with each infant, it could regard only the *infant pauper*: but this benefit should extend much further; it should comprehend the preservation of a number of subjects who now fall a sacrifice to this disease, before they can judge what is good for themselves. Those who ought to be charged with the poor, that they be taught the principles of their religion at a proper age, should, as I have said,

(a) See page 90.

also see that infants be *inoculated*, that they may live to maturity of reason: For poisonous as some of the houses of the indigent are found to be, by means of their filthiness, a great part of the 8000 poor infants in the *bills of mortality*, are sent to their long home by the *small-pox*.

9. Life being confessedly the great object of *police*, the people should be put in a capacity of expanding themselves more, and fewer of them be crowded into narrow streets and alleys. This requires a more accurate investigation than my leisure admits of at present, and may at length depend on individuals who *let*, and others who *hire* such tenements.

There are some estates in building, in these cities, where the land-tax and the window-lights eat up the greatest part of the produce. These are capable of improvement for the service of *landlord* and *tenant*, but they require assistance. It would be better, if the city of *London* were to purchase the ground and build, though the rents should be *trifling*, than leave nurseries to breed *sickness*; obscure dens for *thieves*, or tenements, to tumble on the heads of citizens.

10. *Westminster* requires *funds*, or estates, to be employed for the *public good*. The parishes should be possessed of power to levy monies for the removal of all nuisances, or advance any good the *quarter-session* may approve; I mean, under certain limitations: and these parishes may always apply to parliament.

11. We are in want of a public officer or two, whose sole business should be to examine into the state of the *working poor*. One of the *overseers of each parish* might be on *salary*, subordinate to the *vestry*, *governors*, or *guardians*. He might unite with other overseers, in doing the *ordinary* parochial business; and be moreover charged with the *extraordinary* duty. As this office is generally undertaken unwillingly, and only for a year, we can but ill expect the common duty should be well performed, much less any new duty, however necessary, be well executed. If such an officer had his clue, and was supplied with proper printed papers in marginal order, with blanks, he would be enabled to fill them up, and make reports on heads of great usefulness.—The

articles which I recommend are. 1. N^o.—2. Name of persons : under which, if can read, *r*; if has had the small-pox, *p*, &c.—3. Age.—4. Where living, so as to be easily found.—5. What trade or occupation.—6. What particular defect of body or mind which may incapacitate for labour, &c.—To me it is a self-evident proposition, that if all the people were taught *to read*, there could be no distinction, or presumption arising from superiority : and as they have the use of the scriptures, a portion of their time would be employed when they are not occupied in labour. This would be the case, if the parochial settlement depended on it, as I have recommended (*a*). I remember a conversation I once had with a worthy magistrate (*b*), upon the subject of *charity-schools*; his observation was, “ Religion is already at a low ebb ; if there were no such schools, there would be no religion among the common people.” I agree with him : as it is, I fear the pernicious example, and evil discourse, of parents, wears off in the evening, the good impressions the child receives at the *day-school*, in the morning. The only method for us to establish a solid *police*, is to endow *schools* upon the principle of *Christ-Church*, (except the learned part) to teach young persons work, as well as reading, &c. the schools to be maintained by a tax on our *diversions*, and *profuse unnecessary expence*. If, at the same time, a qualification for a child’s admittance into such school, were a *strong certificate* of the piety and industry of the parents, with respect to the education of their other children, it would become the *interest* of the people to cultivate the duties of religion and *good order*.

A nation arrived to so high a pitch of civilization, must be equally moral ; and if the means of moral instruction are not provided, the people will only become the more ingenious in *thievery*, and the arts of preying on each other.—These seem to be objects worthy of your enquiry, in your legislative capacity, that in this age of parade in *patriotism*, we may not lose the meaning and sense of the word, but discover who is most anxious for the preservation of their country ; who wishes to keep the inhabitants of it ; and who is indifferent about its population. I have no idea of *country*, but as relative to the *people* who compose the nation : their preservation, by means of laws and government, is the object of it : I think every infant in distress, is *my country* ! Farewell.

L E T T E R

(*a*) See page 157.

(*b*) Sir Robert Ladbroke.

L E T T E R XXVI.

PERHAPS no age, nor country can produce an instance of such a distinguished regard to one distressed class of mankind, as the present time, in this nation. The truly Reverend Mr. Hetherington has given a charity to *blind* persons, not being *common beggars*, nor *paupers*, in so princely a manner, with respect to the sum granted, as well as the uncommon purity of his design, it hath justly excited the attention of a great part of our fellow-subjects.

The occasion of my letters to you, calls for *my* remarks: I wish I could suggest a well digested plan, which could fully complete the work, this reverend gentleman has so piously begun. — The sum of £20,000 *3 per cents.* is £.600 *per annum*; allowing £.100 for charges, and I suppose some contingent bounties, this sum reaches to the relief of *fifty* persons, for a ten pounds pension yearly. Such a number has been *easily* found, and I dare say selected with great propriety, out of 711 petitioners. I understand that a preference has been given to hoary age; and next to this, the infant whose parents are distressed with more than one blind child. Considering that the strongest affections of the human heart descend, and that the aged oftentimes outlive *their* children, the choice seems to have been as judicious as it is pious and humane. It is not probable, the donor will find cause to withdraw the allowance from any one to whom it is made; yet being continued, it can afford relief to no others, but as vacancies happen by death, which as the objects are of an extreme old age will be frequent.

With respect to the exclusion of those who are now *common beggars*, our *police* calls on us to examine in what situation *they* are: Others, however entitled to commiseration, find a support in a more decent manner, than by means of common beggary: How long some of them may be kept out of this wretched state, is not so easy to determine. While their friends find any kind of employment for them, or supply them with bread, it is a proof of virtue: and they deserve encouragement who take care of their poor distressed relations.

The deprivation of sight being considered as one of the greatest calamities incident to human life, many common beggars draw a support from exposing those tender balls the eyes, whose lights extinguished, no longer can behold the "face of *kindred* or of friend,—dark as the grave amidst the bustling world." Well may they tell a mournful tale, though it reach the ears of passengers who only can afford a tear. But we often see alms drawn from his hard working hand, whose honest heart swells big with gratitude, that *he* has sight, and can behold the sun.

If blindness proves *profitable* to the beggar, it is *shameful* to the civil magistrate, when he suffers it to be exposed in our streets. There may be in *London* and *Westminster*, at least half as many *blind common beggars* as there were petitioners for Mr. *Hetherington's* charity. I mean half of the 252 belonging to these cities. In hopes to extract something useful, I have taken a more than cursory view, and find the classes, &c. allowing for small errors I may have committed, as follows:

Class.	Age.	Gross Number.	London and its Environs.	The rest of England.
1	1 to 10	84	37	47
2	11 to 20	83	17	66
3	21 to 30	92	27	65
4	31 to 40	89	27	62
5	41 to 50	103	43	60
6	51 to 60	92	34	58
7	61 to 70	97	41	56
8	71 to 80	54	18	36
9	81 to 90	17	8	9
		711	252	459

From

From this account it appears that either *London* air, or *London* vices, are very unfriendly to sight, 25 in 71 blind persons belonging to these cities and their environs; or that it was most difficult to people in other parts of the kingdom to make application for the charity; both which may be true. We also find that *fifty*, or only a *fourteenth* part of the candidates could be relieved, a pension of £. 10 *per annum* being given them.

As to the extreme aged, *i. e.* from 80 to 90, there appears to be

From 81 to 84	—	10
From 85 to 88	—	5
Of 90	—	2

17
This has affinity with what I have observed in some of the arithmetical contemplations on mortality, which I have formerly sent you, namely, that only 23 in 1000 born, live to the age of 80 years.

Temperance is confessedly a preservative of sight. Women are the most temperate of the sexes, and I find the proportions to be

Of females	—	315
Of males	—	396

Of the last class of 17 from 80 to 90 years old, I find 10 of them are women, and 8 of these are widows. I apprehend, that the most virtuous women bring on blindness, by labour of eyes in needle-work; by working by candle-light, or too strong a light from the sun; by setting too near a fire-side; by not being enough in the open air; and in general living in small confined rooms. This, I say, happens to the *virtuous*. The loss of sight often comes to the *vicious*, by strong drink, and over-eating, and indulgence in a vice, which in so many forms preys on the health of mankind. I have observed in *Portugal*, where the people are very early given to such lawless indulgences, great numbers are blind.—There are, if I have counted right,

Living as <i>Organists</i>	—	6
By playing on the <i>fiddle</i>	—	17

L1 2

Upon

Upon these two articles it may be remarked, that many blind organists, not having more than £.20 *per annum* might think it improper to make application for this charity; and many blind fiddlers are common beggars, and consequently excluded as petitioners.

I find born blind	—	82
Of whom are infants, of the first class	—	34
Of the 2d, 3d, and 4th classes	—	37
Of the 5th, 6th, and 7th	—	11

The 8th and 9th are all blind by age or accidents.

Many trades which regard the finer arts, and the ornamental parts of life, occasion blindness; and as these are exercised in the highest degree in the capital, it is more than possible blindness may prevail more here than in other parts of the kingdom: this remark may further reconcile the inequality of the numbers in the register in question. Had it comprehended the number of eyes injured, by a presumptuous attempt to mend the works of God, in changing the colour of a lady's skin, we might see a collection very edifying to the elegant world.

The pleasing part of this interesting register of blindness is,

That there are, of married persons	—	201
Of whom are of the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th classes	—	174
The whole number of the above four classes being	—	381

Consequently near half part of these classes are protected by the aid and alliance of conjugal love.

There are also of widows and widowers	—	106
---------------------------------------	---	-----

The whole number of the six last classes, i. e. from the ages of 31 to 90, is	—	452
---	---	-----

The order of Providence, under the sanction of divine and human laws, has furnished the relief of marriage for the distressed; and particularly happy are they who are "eyes to the blind." In one sense every person who relieves those who are deprived of sight, affords them comfort, cherishes their spirits, and cheers their hearts. — The blind have a peculiar sensibility; for tho' they cannot see the operations

of the human soul, in the countenance of others; yet they may feel, for the time, as if a miracle had been wrought by the *charitable*, and they restored to their sight. Mr. *Hetherington* must have seen things in this glorious light, when he exercised his philanthropy in a manner so correspondent with the precepts of his great Lord and Master!

Among extraordinary circumstances I observe, that one man of the third class travels ten miles three times in a week to carry goods to market for hire; and to buy corn, flour, and fish for sale for his own account, for the support of his father-in-law, his mother, and himself.— One of thirty years old in consequence of a fever, being in a frenzy destroyed his sight by his own hands!—*Sarah Johnson* of *Dover*. She is one of *twenty-six* children by the same parents, of whom *four* were born blind.—*Margaret Kelly* of *St. George in the East*. She is one of *twenty-three* children.

In pity to several of these candidates it may be also observed, that they labour under various other maladies besides *blindness*. Many, as I have mentioned, derive a support from wedlock. Others, by playing on musical instruments. Some turn a wheel, and a few even contribute to the maintenance of families. In general they depend for bread on their poor relations, and have been recommended by the most respectable people of their several neighbourhoods as fit objects for the relief which Mr. *Hetherington* has generously given, so far exceeding any other instance of the kind.

What adds to the pity due, notwithstanding so many of the blind are arrived to a very advanced age, upon the whole, themselves and their parents have at this time alive, no less than 1396 children, which divided on the four middle classes, viz. 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th, is near 3 to each family; but many of these have from 5 to 12 children each. From hence we may receive the stronger impression of their wants, under circumstances of blindness, so piercing to the *labouring poor*.

The

The only settled incomes of the several classes, of which many are voluntary donations, I find to be as follows:

1st. of 84. £.5:0:0	2d. of 83. £.11:0:0	3d. of 92. £.36:4:0
4th. of 89. £.135:8:6	5th. of 103. £.211:18:0	6th. of 92. £.134:8:0
7th. of 97. £.154:14:0	8th. of 54. £.108:16:0	9th. of 17. £.12:10:0

The whole amount (exclusive of the 6 organists) being £.809:18:6

Supposing this sum divided among 661 (the candidates not relieved) is near 24s each (*a*). I compute the produce of some part of their little incomes, it not being specifically determined. I am grieved to find the pensions, allowances, and inheritances above-mentioned, exhibit such strong marks of extreme poverty, not above one in six having any allowance whatsoever; and some of these, hardly bearing the name of an *allowance*. Among them, some are doubtless great objects of compassion: The mode of relieving them must be by the affluence of individuals best acquainted with their real situation: It is in every man's breast to solicit his opulent friend for the relief of him who is worthy of such charity.

If it were possible to provide a fund for the remaining 661 candidates; upon the face of the list, they are all objects; but as £.10 each would require the sum *per annum* of £.6610, being the interest of £.200,000, or *ten times* the princely sum which Mr. *Hetherington* gave, we must turn our thoughts to a more practicable mode, distinguishing the most distressed, and appealing to the most affluent and charitable.

A letter addressed to the Printer of the Public Advertiser some weeks since, signed *Charity*, recommends to me, a *guinea subscription* for the relief of the blind. I am myself too blind and too lame; too far advanced in life, and with too many duties in it, to think of such an undertaking,

(*q*) I have not seen a List of the Candidates relieved.

taking, were it practicable, and proper. Further I do not take upon me to pronounce, upon the *proposal*; but this I venture to recommend, that the gentlemen directors of this bounty belonging to *Christ's-Church Hospital*, who are *properly* possessors of the list, or register, do reprint the same, omitting the objects already relieved, and send it to such persons whose fortunes and zeal may prompt them to take some of the candidates under *their* protection. This I conceive would be of use to excite charity for such individuals, as perchance may live in the respective neighbourhoods of the affluent; and with whose true condition such persons may be easily made acquainted.

With respect to our *police*, the question is, what are we to do with the *blind beggars* who now wander about utterly unprofitable to society, often employing a young person who might be of use, or a dog which must be fed.—Those who play on musical instruments serve to make a variety in life: They contribute to alleviate their own misery, and divert the common people. I apprehend this kind of employment might be carried much further: and if such blind persons could neither knit nor spin, they might turn a wheel.

Among blind men of education, we find to what a height of *science* some arrive, as if they had a more familiar intercourse with the intellectual world, from being shut out of the enjoyment of the visible creation.

As "*all things happen for good to the good*," blindness is not without its advantages. Those who are deprived of sight, may *hear* the cries of misery, but they cannot *behold* it! Whatever propensities they have, the *lust* of the *eye*, and the *pride* of life, cannot pervert their hearts, nor draw their thoughts from heaven.—They cannot look on *poverty* with scorn, nor shew respect to *insolence* pampered with abundance, unmindful of the hand that gave it. Their thoughts may take a larger prospect of the intellectual world, raised above the level of groveling mortals.—In these views the blind are objects of envy, and surely they are respectful, as Providence has ordained that so it should be: and the

more respectable they are, the more they call for pity, 'till heaven, in its appointed time, shall convey them to those regions of immortal vision, where they will behold the glories of a heavenly state.

In the mean while, these poor persons might be rendered leaders to the *moral blind*, and teach them the way to happiness in both worlds. To this object we ought to apply our powers, persuaded as I am, that in the mansions of the poor, they might be admirable teachers of children, if not of the aged, to say their prayers *properly*: they might be easily taught to correct children in their reading and pronounciation: they might repeat prose or verse, with a compass of memory, superior to those who have the full sense of sight. And as the blind have so wonderful a propensity to music, they might be easily taught enough of the fiddle to amuse the *paupers* in their hours of recreation; and availing themselves of sense and sound, render their own lives the more comfortable, whilst they administered much to the advantage of their fellow-creatures. *Farewell.*

LETTER

L E T T E R XXVII.

WHERE the greatest number is assembled, there will both good and evil prevail in the highest degree. These cities call for our greatest attention: like the heart in the animal composition, by the streams which flow from it, the limbs are rendered active; and the reflux recruits the strength, which again animates the frame. The present easy communication of the people, gives the most part the same turn of thought; which is become more immoral than is generally imagined by those whose experience is circumscribed. I am not surprized, that a propensity to evil should be now found, even among the servants of *farmers*, beyond what has been known in the earlier periods of this century. Our *manners* are more civilized; but our morals are in a more barbarous state. Many who live in the full enjoyment of the bounties of Providence, abuse them in as dangerous a manner to others, as to themselves.

The present time is distinguished as the *age of Pleasure*: her altars are erected in every street and corner: the common people are initiated into her *mysteries*; and though, like the rich, they are baulked in the enjoyment, amusement they must have; and if it were simple, and not attended with any expence; if it did not check *industry*, nor wound *morality*, it were well; but it cuts like a two-edged sword. If we consider the necessities which *intemperance* creates, we may wonder that *robbery* is not more common. In proportion as the wants of the superior classes are increased by their expences, they will be as little concerned about offending each other, while they keep within the limits of the law, as themselves are subject to be offended by those who are *desperate*. As we are the freest nation, we seem to

purſue our object with the moſt eagerneſs. *Vanity* and *ambition* intoxicate many of the higher claſſes: and many of the lower act as if they had a right to pillage their ſuperiors, though they are ſenſible they cannot do it but with a halter about their necks. We know that robberies are become more frequent; and that as religion declines in our eſteem and veneration, the paſſions of men grow ſtronger, and more difficult to be reſtrained; and conſequently, that ſuch practices will prevail, in ſo much the greater degree. Customs grow into habits; and many habits collected, as brooks make rivers, which ſometimes overflow their banks, and threaten to lay a country waſte; we have warning given us that we may prevent the deſtroyation. From whatever cauſe the evil ariſes, good ſenſe, *knowledge*, and *experience*, muſt ſuggeſt the remedy.

You are not unacquainted, that every age has produced inſtances of *concubinage*, as it were in defiance of the *chriſtian* law; but of late it ſeems to have gained ground amongſt us; as if it kept pace with our immoderate love of *amusements*. Thoſe who are not reſtrained by conſiderations drawn from the *chriſtian* inſtitution, are more inclined to enter into a bargain which they can diſſolve when they pleaſe, than to engage in a contract by which they are legally bound. Promiſcuous commerce naturally tends to diſſolve the ties of civil free ſociety: it invades the rights of *women*, and cancels the obligation, which is founded in nature, with regard to the obligation of one to one. It commits violence on poſterity, in the diſinheritance of children born under this lawleſs agreement: and in proportion as *marriage* loſes ground, among the higher claſſes, the common people will imitate the example, and carry it greater lengths, as they are more ignorant, uncivilized, and inattentive to their religion. If the illegitimate children of the wealthy often ſuffer, how much more thoſe of the inferior claſſes of the people. And though ſome children come into the world clandeſtinely, who might have had no exiſtence, many more would be produced by the contract of wedlock. It is apparent, that where *vice* predominates moſt, there are feweſt children. This is proved by the great call for people from the country, to ſupply our *London* conſumption: we have but few ſervants who were born upon the ſpot. If we reckon

reckon such domestics to be eighty thousand, or 1 to 8 persons, and only 1 in 40 to die annually, this article alone requires a supply of two thousand. In general, 1 in 30, comprehending infancy and old age, appear to die, as I have found in other parts of England, as well as in London; but these persons being for the most part of 20 to 40 years of age, unless their own vices, or unseasonable attendance on the vices of their masters, carry them off the stage of life, only 1 in 40 may be supposed to fall annually. Whether the consumption be greater or less, the vice which abounds in these cities, is destructive of population, and increases in malignity, in proportion to the numbers congregated.

I have often heard the marriage-act mentioned, as an obstruction to marriage. If it be true with regard to marriages of the worst kind, or contracts of wedlock the least considered or digested, it is calculated to make people consider, and consequently render them the more faithful to the engagement, when they enter into it. If the want of people proves a greater evil, than any good that can be ascribed to the marriage-act, as it now stands, it may require some amendment. In regard to the effects of the neglect of marriage, it is easy to conceive, that if men have no engagements to keep them at home, they will go abroad. If the sober duties of domestic life, the charms of conjugal love, and the pleasures of parental affection, are strangers to their breast; the common race of mortals not having sufficient resources in their own minds for constant entertainment, if they do no good, they will do evil. The meanest mechanic has some hours of leisure, which must be filled up: things hang in a chain: we must not be surprized to find so many scenes of debauchery.—The effectual remedy will be found only in religion, and the awe that men stand in with regard to a life to come.

Further, whatever wounds the dignity and usefulness of marriage, operates against filial piety and obedience, in the same manner as a spirit of presumption is apt to disturb domestic life, with regard to the duty of servants to masters: accordingly we find the authority both of parents and masters much enervated, and the familiar intercourse of life changed from that simplicity which constitutes the greatest part of true harmony. The appellations of father and son, do not at this time

convey such genuine ideas of *affection, honour, and obedience*, as they have done in years past. Can mutual love maintain its dignity? As an expensive manner of living increases, this can hardly fail of bringing on secret wishes for the inheritance: Whether it prevails so much as to be reckoned any material cause of our immorality, I leave you to judge; but I will venture to say, that our present customs and manners must be in some degree changed, or they will hurry us down the stream of vanity, and plunge us into national misfortunes.

It is confessed, that a considerable part of our nobility and gentry, spend a larger portion of their time in dissipation and amusement, than is consistent with a true plan of liberty, national honour, and security. The happiness of a free and intelligent nation, enjoying so many advantages, depending so much on mutual confidence, sobriety, and good order, must have a suitable prop, built on a foundation of *solid virtue*.

If our riches are not equal to our property, nor our property equal to our expences: if our vast consumption outruns the produce of our lands, under the accidents of seasons, do we not *fund* the gifts of Nature, and live by a kind of anticipation of the bounties of Heaven? So far as this is true, we can have nothing to expect for the *better*, till we *change* our habits and customs.

Of all the nations in *Europe*, we are, in general, the most dainty: this is no proof of manliness; it is the natural effect of great plenty; but still we complain of *scarcity*. The *fish* which our *Newfoundland* waters produce, I have said, is excellent food, and may be had at 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* per pound:—but we do not *like* it: we do not *chuse* it: we rather chuse to *complain*. *Rice* is no less desirable; and it might be brought to us at nearly the same price; and in mixtures with *herbage* and animal substances, most agreeable: but we are used to *solid* beef, mutton, and wheaten bread. The prejudices of the people lead them to disdain the frugal aliment, which many other nations rejoice in, and call luxury. One of the chief operating causes is, that gentlemen of landed estates are interested in the produce of their own land: but we may add, that our very *paupers* have such romantic ideas of liberty, as to imagine they

may give the law, instead of receiving it. We go on in a certain beaten track, complaining of an evil, the remedy of which is in our own hands. But is the produce of the earth so properly divided, that all are sufficiently supplied? Certainly not: the choice of food seems to require a compromise, according to occasional scarcity; but if we will not eat such food as can be provided cheap, the poorest can have no other right to complain of want, than that some eat more in quantity than comes to their share: I believe all men eat more in quantity than they ought.

The interested principle which influences so great a part of mankind, at the same time that it sets the world in motion, and in many instances promotes the *general good*, in others operates very strongly against it. Of this we have a remarkable proof in our sister island: I have met with gentlemen who have large estates in *Ireland*, and one might be led to imagine deeply interested to promote the cause of *protestantism* in that country, yet they express themselves with great coldness upon this subject; alledging, that the poor wretched slavish-minded papist, gives his labour much cheaper than the protestant: and if we judge from the event, this opinion really operates with strength.

If the contentment of subjects in general depends on frugality, and frugality is the true source of abundance: if true self-love and social are the same; it is very obvious by what means alone we are to expect those halcyon days we so fondly seek after. It requires a more than common sagacity to distinguish the evils to which life is subject; and the complaints which arise from humour, and real distress; but if half the time were spent in putting those who are in real want, in a method of relieving themselves, as is wasted in unjust or fruitless complaints, the affairs of the world would certainly go on much better than they do. Yet are we not to imagine, complaint from mere habit and humour, is *peculiar* to us; we are only sure wherever it predominates most, it is a proof of ingratitude to heaven; and we may generally observe, carries its own chastisement with it.

Commerce

Commerce and politics regarding the dependance of one thing on another, are sciences to which the acutest merchant, or the ablest politician is not always equal. But we know, that necessaries are, at what we call a *high price*: we are sure, that we have not been able to export any grain for these *twelve or fourteen* years past; and that we have imported a very large quantity of oats. It is said, that 600,000 quarters of oats are brought yearly to market, for the consumption of these cities, and their environs. This quantity will provide food for 60 to 70,000 horses, or one horse for every ten persons, supposing 700,000 people. This is incredible: some pretend that *London* has full 12,000 horses for hire for *amusement*. In general, it is a fact, that with all our improvements in cultivation, we do not grow oats sufficient for our own consumption; and there are many testimonies that we devour the produce of the land too fast, by means of horses. If we expend so much in these cities, where there is no agriculture, and reckon but *six times* as much consumed in the whole kingdom, it would amount to 3,600,000 quarters, or 600,000 more than we were said to grow, when much less wheaten bread was eaten. Were we to cultivate every inch of land on this island, without increasing a single inhabitant, *horses for pleasure and amusement* might devour it, and leave the people with *short-commons*. Does this operate on *morals*? or is it only an article of *police*? I think it affects both; and moreover that it suggests a plan for raising a revenue on this amusement, for the support of *police*; that what the people lose by folly and extravagance in one instance, they may gain by a prudent, moral, and religious behaviour in many others. This perhaps is the best that can be done, in an imperfect state of things, and in an age when so many complain of the vices of their neighbour, and so few correct their own.

When I consider the vastness of *our* consumption; and the moderate quantities of provision for man and beast, expended in some countries where I have lived; I am sure it is not merely the *necessaries* of life, but the habit of enjoying a superfluity, which creates a great part of the complaint, preys on the morals of the people, and inclines so many to become *thieves*. The evil may perchance cure itself, but we may first politically suffer more than we are aware of; for our habits do not regard

our own produce only, but also our imports from abroad. We might carry on a vast trade, and receive a vast revenue, and yet sap the foundations of our strength. This is a lesson hard to learn *without experience* of the evil; but many a merchant has known it in private life; and it may reach us, in some degree, in our national capacity. *Frugality* and *police* have a great affinity; they promote wealth, virtue, and good order.

Wool and *corn* are our two great articles, the *manufactory* of both which, if so I may call it, constitutes the most essential part of our raiment and food, our internal strength, and foreign importance. The export of one *thirtieth* part of our *wheat*, or a *sixtieth* part of all our grain, produced an acquisition of above half a million of money annually; but this fountain of wealth is dried up.

As to our *sugar*, we take the same care that foreigners shall have none of it; the custom of sipping tea prevails so universally, it carries it all down our own throats! The more extravagant we are, the less we seem to attend to our being tributary to other nations, for the interest of their money, which we have spent in war!—But still, in a comparative view, we flourish! The trunk is so well watered from various other springs, we behold with pleasure the branches shoot forth. We yet enjoy the advantages of our success in *war*: the accumulation of our property; the improvement of our lands; our skill in arts and manufactures: and the true spirit of liberty, is not yet so abused; but we are distinguished among the nations: but we must remember, that all things have their bounds; and that a presumptuous opinion of security, often proves an enemy to mankind.

The check which *false credit* has lately met with, has in some measure prevented the advance of the price of the *necessaries*, as well as the *ornaments* of life; but we yet live too much by *exaction*. It is thus the people acquire an interest, I will be bold to call it, a *thievish* turn. Had the extravagance of false credit gone on, and every class of the people exacted on one another, as they could raise money; it would have administered the more to the destruction of domestic economy; and

and every virtue that can bear the name of *police*. In a word, it would have operated on our morals, and have taught greater numbers to turn thieves. To me it is evident that *frugality* must be our *guardian angel*.

In every nation of *Europe*, the prices of necessities are much higher than they were. This is an effect of gold and silver being more plenty; but as we have more credit in circulation, in proportion to our number of people, and are the freest nation, the spirit of commerce strongest, and our temper the most daring, we are in the most danger of outrunning the measure of our security. Others consuming only half so much as we do, for instance in *animal* substance, denominate that to be luxury and extravagance, which we call want and distress. Such is the force of custom and habit! Though the various temporal states of nations, determines their political excellency; their *moral character*, by which they must ultimately stand or fall, is of a superior nature.

I indulge no presumptuous prophetic spirit. If the wiser part will *think*, and shew an example to the weaker, we may be morally sure of *plenty, domestic peace, and security*; but to boast of *good laws*, without *police*, is a contradiction in terms. In the degree we exercise moderation and temperance, the bounties of Providence will be distributed with a more equal hand; and we shall be the more ashamed to see the poor *extravagant or lazy*.

If we mean to flourish, without any *struggles* with ourselves, or other nations, we shall think of making some vigorous efforts to exonerate the state, with respect to a part of our *public debt*. Vast as it is, one winter's calm, unprejudiced debate in *your house*, and a resolution to lop off a few *unnecessary expences*; to employ a few thousand people more in procuring the necessities of life, and a few less in furnishing such a profusion of the ornaments of it, will do the business. If the greater part of our *solid improvements*, are the genuine produce of the public debt, yet we are sensible it hath its bounds, and is become too ponderous. Those who steel their hearts against the thoughts of being subject to repay, in proportion to the value of the improvements, which as individuals they actually possess, are *criminal*. To forget the justice

due to each other, is to wound the *public* in the most vulnerable part; and whilst it gives a stab to our *moral* character, it will involve our political interest. Can the burthen of the state be lightened but by the strength of the individuals who compose it? Every peasant takes his share; and That share consists in his ability to labour: but it will be in vain to think of *his* paying the debt, or any portion of it, beyond the bare interest. Can we through his means prepare for the *chastisement* of war, or silence those complaints, or remove those wants, which arise from taxes necessary for the payment of the interest of our debt? This *incumbrance* operates on our morals; for our wants being in proportion to the calls made upon us; and our riches not being equal to *what we call our property*, every one, from the highest to the lowest, is in want. Can the event of *want*, and the temptations which are its constant appendages, produce good to the community?

As our youth of the superior classes emulate their seniors, the inferior ape theirs, in the various arts of procuring money, to satisfy their *wants*. Whether in high life, or in low, if the desire of money rages in the breast, it is like a dropsy, increased by the gratification of thirst. In the same degree that vice predominates, the progress of the distemper will be the more rapid and deadly, especially where it works on meanness of heart, *ignorance*, or *poverty*. From this cause proceeds the custom of gaming; a crime I have already exclaimed against. It is common in many parts of *Christendom*, and a fashionable amusement in high life, though much below the dignity of a gentleman. It is pregnant with great mischiefs and disorders. Whether this passion be ascribed to *avarice*, *expensive living*, or a habit of amusement, is not very material: it seems to be a compound of these three vices. Women of *condition*, and *no condition*, also play high; and many of them are *at play*, when they should be *at work*. What a destructive example doth this exhibit to the eyes of the *common people*, who may be naturally led to think, they too may play a game of another kind, and *pillage* in the best manner they are able! In the ordinary course of the traffic of mankind, every one gains: in this negotiation, no one can be benefited but by another's loss.

Common thieves are remarkable for gaming. This observation may make a *gentleman* start, as if he saw the *devil*; but it is true. You perceive I do not mean to flatter other people's faults, whatever I may do with regard to my own: and whether I shoot a man through the head, and rob him; or take advantage of his passion for play, and by winning his money, bring him into such a state of desperation that he shoots himself; in the view of humanity it is equally shocking. Though human laws cannot take cognizance of this vice in the same degree as for murder, religion looks on with a stern and awful brow, and threatens punishment. This vice is already under certain legal restraints; but they are grown obsolete; they are too weak for the opulent, and not adapted to the state of the indigent.

If, as I have said, the higher classes shew the example to pillage each other; the lower will practise the same thing, proceeding in the last degree to violence and rapine. This pernicious practice calls for the interposition of the *civil magistrate*, unawed by any distinction of rank or condition; particularly in those nocturnal incantations, when gaming murders sleep; and fascinating the wretched actor, in the real scene of splendid misery, often brings him to a precipice, from whence he is hurled into perdition! Farewell.

LETTER

This extravagant custom will be more honoured in the breach than in the observance of it. A less pompous feast (for still it will be a feast)

Common thieves are remarkable for gaming. This observation may make a gentleman start, as if he saw the devil; but it is true. You perceive I do not mean to flatter other people's faults, whatever I may do with regard to my own; and whether I shoot a man through the head, and rob him; or take advantage of his passion for play, and by winning his money, I shoot him in a like manner, it is equally shocking. Though human laws cannot take cognizance of these crimes, the degree of sin is the same, and religion looks on with a stern countenance at both.

THE season of the year (a) is come, in which the several communities meet, in order to promote the interests of their respective charities. Among others, I attend at some of them. It is natural upon such occasions, to break bread together; but if an hundred loaves are sufficient, why should a thousand be provided? This is the effect of vanity and voluptuousness. To spend £.150 or £.200 in eating and drinking, is an abomination! To dine at a guinea a head, when a man in common life cannot afford himself above a shilling, is absurd. Some give to the plate 5s. or half a guinea, others a guinea or more. Why?—Because they are invited to a *splendid feast*? If this were really the case, they would have their reward. Let them give: but it is not to be imagin'd, that like the *Pharisee* of old, they mean to proclaim their deeds with the sound of a trumpet. No: this practice is the mere force of custom joined to the genuine effects of luxury.

The charity for the distressed children of the *clergy*, raises at the utmost £.1000, and their advocates have *swallowed* £.400 in a *dinner*. Yes: but this is at the *expence of the stewards*! Granted; but will stewards be found from generation to generation who will be at such a profuse expence? If the governors or directors of charities in general were to find such a number of rich and generous persons every year, wealth and generosity ought to be turned into a different channel.

This extravagant custom will be more honoured in the breach than in the observance of it. A less pompous feast (for still it will be a feast)

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will

(a) May.

will give a greater stability to the object which is intended to be supported. The sums annually spent, exclusive of all *city trading companies*, and their *devourings*, is between £.2,500 and £.3,000 a year. Thus we labour through *expensive*, and at best, *noisy and inelegant dinners*, under the reproachful notion, that unless we are splendid in this voluptuousness, we shall not find people's hearts open to give.

I also grant, that many of these splendid feasts, being changed into a *reasonable dinner*, it would be called a *beggarly entertainment*, and some persons might decline going to them on that account: but they would be easily shamed into a compliance, and even influenced by motives of interest; for tho' a young man of large fortune may make no difficulty in paying ten or twenty pounds, or as it has sometimes happened £.30 or £.40, a prudent merchant, or a *salary officer of the crown*, may with great propriety demur.

I have been charged with the direction of *one feast*, in behalf of the *poor*: It is indeed so modest an entertainment that we do not *ask for money at the table*: we only solicit for subscriptions, on the occasion, by one friend's asking another. We entertain with plenty of the best kind of food, as rich *soops*, *mutton*, *beef*, *fowls*, *hams*, *vegetables*, *pudding*, and *fish*, and the rich fruits of southern climes, as much as a *tavern keeper*, or a *cook*, will provide for five shillings a head; *i. e.* we have *so much victuals*, according to a bill of fare, agreed for *so much money*, and we generally entertain one hundred and twenty persons for £.27. Some charities usually give £.80 or £.90 for victuals only. But then we have no *confectionary*, and except it be a remove of soup, to give place to fish, we have but *one course*. Our wine, which is a further charge, is not of the expensive kind; and it seldom costs above £.15. Thus for the sum of £.40 or £.50 we give our *annual entertainment* (a), and a great sum I think it is! We observe the *good old custom of selling as many tickets as we can*, which generally amounts to 80: for these we receive, in part of the expence, £.20; so that the eight stewards have seldom more to pay than 50s. to £.3 each.

People

(a) Marine Society.

People of the first rank in the nation, and the most elegant persons, are satisfied: nay more, they are cordially pleased. Every thing is conducted with great order, peace and harmony. We have indeed no clang of wretched music, but we have a choir of singing boys, and have sense as well as sound, at a trifling charge, in an elegant and harmonious taste, confined within the bounds of prudence. We seek for an occasion of being charitable, pious and humane: we wish to teach the people frugality and industry, rather than shew them a very bad example.

In this country we do not understand the doctrine of *sumptuary laws*, as in *Prussia*; but every man who enjoys his reason, and is a real friend to society, must be glad to act in such a manner as may tend most to the preservation of the people. For the same reason, I cannot but lament the disgrace of sumptuous feasts in City-Halls, as if these were so many temples dedicated to *Bacchus*, instead of the piety, industry and commerce our forefathers meant to promote. A friend of mine once assured me, that a person of his acquaintance, whose freedom of a company cost him £.30, acknowledged that, in return, he had feasted to the value of £.1500 (a). We see how many thousand beggars swarm in our streets. And why is this? The blessings of heaven are not properly distributed by the stewards of its bounties: The money, time, and attention employed in such extravagant *feastings*, are due to the poor, to make them happy by *subordination, knowledge, and industry*. Where there is such a superfluity of wealth, a part of it, at least, should be devoted to the recovery of the people to a sense of duty, and likewise to the maintenance of police; that if the donors of charities, now become large estates, rise from their graves, they may not reproach us with any wanton negligence on one side, and a profusion on the other. Farewell.

(a) Supposing an entertainment every tenth day at a guinea a head, (and I have known some rich companies, or deputations of companies, meet three or four times in a week) it amounts to £.1533 in forty years.

to its latest period. Threescore years and ten, we are told, is the ordinary limit of the life of man; and we have good reason to believe it true, that man of all animals is the most capable of repair; and in his political state he is capable of renovation from generation to generation. Speaking as a man, it is in the power of a people to protect or accelerate their ruin; but as a nation, it is not in their power to prevent it. **LETTRE XXIX.**

IN the prosecution of designs for the *public* good, more address is necessary than in soliciting a *personal* advantage. We daily behold monuments erected to piety and *public* use, by the force of *private* munificence; and in most concerns of this nature, the individual who takes the lead gratifies some interest, passion, or humour; but if the thing is well conducted, it is not the less happy, on this account. What has often surprised me, is the little knowledge and attention shewn by members of a community, in the choice of men ignorant of what is to be done; and in the execution of the business they frequently defeat their own end, and sacrifice the *public* good. I have no officers to recommend: the objects I plead for, I hope you will consider as *great national concerns*, and some of them very important. The design of reforming *thieves*, cannot be executed without the interposition of the legislature; and therefore I recommend it to you. Examine it with candour; consider how deeply *humanity* and *religion* are interested; and how far *sound policy* may be promoted. Let not the expence deter you: You are a *political arithmetician*: Compute how abundantly the charge will be repaid. Let our opulency as individuals; our genius, which enables us to comprehend great things; and our abilities to perform them, combine to further, not frustrate the plan.

Evils will come, in spite of all our care, and *states* will be dissolved: let us grant that "every state, however perfect in its frame, contains the seeds of its own dissolution:" but this is one of those truths, similar to the *certainty* of a man's own death, and the *uncertainty* when the day will be. He goes about the affairs of life, and protracts his temporal existence,

to its latest period. Threescore years and ten, we are told, is the ordinary limit of the life of man; and we have good reason to believe it true, tho' man of all animals is the most *capable of repair*; and in his political state he is capable of renovation from generation to generation. Speaking as a man, it is in the power of a people to protract or accelerate their ruin. Those events which no mortal can foresee, cannot, for the same reason, be guarded against by mortals; but it is given to man to form a judgment of the events of things, according to the actions of men. As individuals, let us endeavour to act a consistent part, remembering that *self-denial* is coeval with human nature. The *reason* of man was given him with his Being, and his *passions* were put under its controul. That *virtue* will reward her true votaries, they cannot doubt; but it doth not follow she will promote them in the way their fancy may suggest.

You are not ignorant that it is sometimes difficult to drag forth the sense of a community; and that some evils make an impression on the sufferer alone; and on him, only for the time he suffers. This may now be the case of many individuals; but legislators carry their ideas into remoter consequences. When religion is not the *ruling passion* of the times, the plan most tinctured with it will appear the most *romantic*; but when it is apparently united with temporal safety and happiness, we may be induced to shew it some honour. Let our minds be ever so much warped from their *natural* bent to religion, we must revert to the general principle, that if *there is a God*, he rules over all; and with respect to those who believe in the *Christian* dispensation, we have a law for our standard, which respects both worlds, and by That law we ought to direct our course. Many know so little of it, they do not comprehend that it *exalts the mind, ennobles the understanding, and fills the heart with gladness*, in the hope of a reward of their obedience, in the life to come! If virtue is the supreme happiness of man, the most virtuous, consistent plan, must be the most beneficial to society. The bias the tender affections often takes, converts our very foibles into virtues; and renders it difficult to discern, which of the two operates the strongest, our reason, or our passions.

The punishment proposed for malefactors, has this advantage over all others, which perhaps can be devised; the degree of the punishment may be regulated, to the utmost exactness, as to weeks, or months, or years of confinement. And how glorious it will be to preserve those very persons who have been thought irrecoverably lost, and the most dangerous to society. It may prevent many from becoming a sacrifice to their own hearts; and by correcting their enmity to God, and their country, convert it into love, peace, and the harmony of society.

In all changes of forms, and modes of government, the ability of executing, as well as the fitness of the object, must be well weighed and considered. There is no reason to believe but that proper persons may be found to execute a good plan. In this case, the duty will render the officers themselves the more worthy subjects; and the more glorious examples of those virtues, of which we stand in so much need. We may be more inclined to acknowledge these truths, and that the thing is right and necessary to be done, than be ready to provide the means of doing it. But will not this condemn us out of our own mouths, if we neglect our duty.

Whether considered as a nation, or a number of individuals, the spirit with which we carry on war, makes us cowards in peace. We breed up enemies in our bowels, and have not resolution enough to subdue them. The state being impoverished, and the property in the hands of the individual, we suffer the rectitude of public measures to be circumscribed by private persons.

The riches being so deposited, and from the nature of our government, a great share of the power of legislation following, it is sometimes hard to know, who is the legislator. But still, we profess to do what is right to be done for the people; and without any refinement, let us consider, that no evil can come closer home to the individual, than the proper chastisement of the most dangerous members of the community.

The public debt, leads us to the consideration of the poverty and inconvenience of many of our public buildings: these are united with police.

Many of our *public edifices* are by no means adequate to the rank in which we stand among the nations. It is said, that we lodge *beggars* in *palaces*, and *kings* in *alms-houses*, alluding to *Greenwich* and *Chelsea* hospitals, and *St. James's-Palace*. Convenience as well as *grandeur*, calls for assistance: The crown is frequently obliged to crouch to subjects for leasehold tenures for *public use*: and to waste in *rents*, and *repairs* of shatter'd tenements, in the course of *thirty* or *forty* years, as much money as would purchase convenient sites, and erect commodious public buildings, to remain through a succession of ages. If contracts are made upon a generous plan, with honest men; and good *surveyors* are appointed, it will be so. If a surveyor is found omiffive in his duty, he should suffer as one of the worst of criminals.

Upon such a plan, some public offices are now proposed to be erected in a central situation, in these cities, on the banks of the *Thames*. I hope they will do honour to the promoters of the design; and administer to our public welfare and glory: and whilst they create admiration in the breast of foreigners, promote *peace* and contentment in our own. As individuals, we shall hardly be ever *richer* than we are; and we are sure the state needs the security of *good order*. Let us turn our thoughts to *buildings*, necessary to our *police* and *civil government*, without which the *public* will fall into a lingering malady. If confidence in the safety of *domestic life* ceases, how is the business of a nation to go on? How is the public to depend on the united force of subjects, to answer the exigences of the state?

We have been thinking, for above *thirty years*, of some new and less sanguinary mode of punishing malefactors; and in the mean time we have suffered the loss of 10 or 12,000 of the ablest subjects by death and transportation: these computed at £.200 each, amount to full £.2,000,000! After *drooping* so long under the national sickness of *indecision*, at length we find two hundred malefactors in one prison, at one time, most of them for felony! *Where is this to end?* We must become ferociously sanguinary, or more determinately humane and consistent. We must change our laws with respect to the punishment of felony. If we cut off, or banish all malefactors, according to law, it is hard to say

to what number it may amount. In so many prisoners assembled in one place, it is less difficult to discover how many scores of them have forfeited their lives to the laws, than to carry the laws into execution: if hanging is horrible to our humanity; it is no less offence against the majesty of liberty, to dispense with the breach of the laws, from mere compassion. Is it not then better, upon the whole, to change the law, than to violate the fundamental principle of obedience to it?—If we resolve upon *labour* and *imprisonment*, as proper punishments, we must digest our plan with *wisdom*, and execute it with a *resolute*, generous, and enlarged mind. A narrow and penurious spirit is by no means admissible in a case where our *lives* and *properties* are at stake.

With regard to *paupers* and the *distressed*, whose education and necessities we are bound to provide for, in order to *prevent* the calamities we are subject to; let us look as far back as the days of *Edward VI.* To view the improvements of subsequent ages, and the glorious works of our times, and yet behold our land so full of beggars, it exhibits the most unpleasing scene imaginable, except the terrors created by malefactors, and the necessity of shedding their blood. The fact is acknowledged: the remedy is proposed. If we should be told, such remedy will be *expensive*, and that the *people* are *too poor*!—Too poor to make the *idle* work, that the *industrious* may sleep in safety in their beds? For shame! It is because we are *rich* and *careless*, we excite so much idleness and robbery. Were we really poor, we should shew too much attention to each others virtue, to suffer such a being as a *housebreaker*, a *highwayman*, or a *pickpocket*.

The legislative power as representing the people, are in the truest sense *the people*; and if the riches of this country are in the hands of individuals, would it not be a rank solecism in government, if the authority by which the people exist, were impeded in the exercise of its powers, by those very persons who are most interested to promote it? The lives and properties of subjects are concerned, and their defects in discernment must be supplied by That *coercive* power, without which no community can be preserved. Whenever private men lose their *political* sight, where there is no leader, they must fall.

The chief object of *police*, which I have presented you, may be considered as one of the most important that has long engaged the thoughts of a *British* legislature. If we mean to convince the world that the throne of the *British* empire, is established in righteousness; the supreme authority of the legislative power, cannot be more happily employed than in the case before us. Let us take the advantage of the most rational plan to remedy the evil. Whatever is most agreeable to the lenient principles of our government, should be considered as the *best method*. If malefactors are properly treated, *good* may grow out of *evil*; and the people in general become religious, by that kind of *coercive power* which constitutes the essence of *all government*; and restrains the evil of the hearts of *all men*. Light and darkness being thus presented to us, if we do not *prefer the one*, we are compelled to *suffer the other*. This is the state of man. To give such impressions of both worlds, as may best preserve the dignity of human nature, and support government on the basis of humanity and religion, is the object in question. I do not say that liberty is in so feverish a *delirium*, as to be guilty of *suicide*. Every subject who can discern that his freedom depends on a secure enjoyment of life and property, should be anxious to *contribute* to the establishment of a *solid police*, in proportion as he feels indignation at the offences offered to *justice, reason, and common-sense*. Government originates from the love of *order*: watered by *police* it grows up to maturity, and in the course of time, spreads a luxuriant comfort and security: but cut off its *branches*, and the mere trunk, however strong it may appear, can afford no shelter.

Government being made up of so many component parts, dependant on each other, furnishes strength, and security, by the instrumentality of a well-regulated *police*. To live in *fear*, is to live in *misery*. If we consider *police* as the result of an improved state of society, where a great number of people is congregated; to invoke the aid of Heaven, and at the same time neglect the means of protection against *thieves and murderers*, is mockery. It exhibits a picture of the fable of *Jupiter and the Waggoner*. Custom gives strength, both in what *men do*, and in what they *suffer*; and if they conclude there is no remedy for an *evil*, to them there is none. Considering how fleeting life is, he who suffers

an evil he can remove, and thus shortens his days of happiness, is evidently an enemy to himself, and forfeits the prerogatives of his reason. True public and private happiness are inseparably united. If the honest man will stand secure amidst the wreck of nature; whether in a public or private capacity, he will surely endeavour to heal the moral wounds which his country has received, and by timely care, prevent a *political* gangrene, or a mortification.

I might write to you a *letter*, every day of my life, upon something which I wish for, in behalf of the public: You have already as many as will make a volume; and still new thoughts crowd into my mind. There are many causes, in this age of extravagance, which contribute to the promotion of various kinds of thievery. What think you of bankruptcies?—The facility with which a man may become a bankrupt, and after squandering great sums, the property of others, conceal as large an amount, with impunity, is notorious. This I take to be one of our crimes, tho' not often existing in the full latitude I represent it. The disasters incident to the commercial world, make us shudder at the thought of persecuting the *unfortunate*: But the same argument may be used in favour of the innocent person who trusts a *rogue*. There are two heads relating to this object, which I recommend to your consideration.

1. Whether a lawful book-debt should not have the same validity as a bond, on which no judgment has been obtained? This has been already before you. If the greater part of our commerce, and the most confidential trust is carried on by books, is it right to give the preference to the lesser object, and That in which there is the greater temptation to fraudulent practices?—But granting there may be reasons for giving *bonds* a preference, let me ask you another question.

2. How does it stand, where books are not kept, to make it appear how large sums of money are dissipated? If a man may be extravagant for a course of years, and so dispose of effects as not to be traced out, how they are gone, is it not a temptation to villainy? Should it not then be a part of our *police*, that any man becoming

a bankrupt, and not producing books, such as give a fair account of his transactions, shall be subject to imprisonment for a certain time, or to some other punishment.

Another evil of a different nature I must beg your permission to mention. The number of country gentlemen of £500 or £1000 a year, whom Providence seems to have appointed as *guardians* of the people, is wasted away. He who might be a sovereign in his own domain, and give health, virtue, and happiness, to his tenants and servants, within the little circle of his property; and look down on what the world vulgarly calls *greatness*, is now lost. He brings his family up to this great town: He embarks in a profuse expence, which his fortune cannot bear: He is lost in the mafs of splendid vanity, and *bewildered in trifles*. Thus his native lustre becomes tarnished, and his genuine beauty deformed! He can now shine only in a borrowed light, as a servile dependant, or servant to some overgrown *lord*, or *commoner*, enriched by the fair course of trade; by transactions with the public; or perchance by the spoils of provinces. This is not the way to plant the seeds of virtue, or to cultivate them. This is not the true ambition of a *free subject*. It hath no resemblance with the ancient sturdy *Roman virtue*, or the sublimer excellence of a *Christian hero*. A man of £500 a year, ought to esteem himself as much a gentleman, as another who has £10,000 *per annum*; and whether his daughters be taught to dance, by the *first master in the metropolis*, or only to move with grace and dignity, in their proper station, he might rejoice in peace and plenty, undisturbed freedom, sound philosophy, true religion, and the hopes which so glorious a condition would certainly inspire.

Men of this class are, with respect to the nobility or gentry of very large fortunes, what subaltern officers are in armies; not less necessary than the *generals*: discipline, good order, and oeconomy, cannot be supported without them. It seems to be a well grounded complaint of the most virtuous and consistent part of the nation, that this valuable *equestrian* order of men, who are the proper patrons of the husbandman and manufacturer, have taken great pains to extinguish their own being.

To

To cherish a desire of pressing forward into a higher station, is a common dictate of self-love; but the measure of this desire, and the means of gratifying it, must constitute the virtue of individuals, and stamp the national character. If gentlemen will hazard their ease and safety, and hunt after objects which throw them out of a station, so honourable to themselves, and so profitable to the community, we must suffer the loss and inconvenience. It is impossible that *all* should live in the highest splendor and opulence; and therefore this untoward passion must introduce disappointment and misery to many individuals, whilst it leaves the people as *sheep without a shepherd*.

Had it pleased Divine Providence to prevent the temptation of splendor, from wearing down this important class of men, and kept them in their proper station, they would have been superior to *false ambition*; and the purity of their manners would have set them high in rank and dignity: they might be the glorious protectors of the indigent and ignorant, the labourer or mechanic, who in the great scale of national weight, is as valuable as the *lord*. It is more than probable we should then have seen many a comfortable cottage, which is now levelled with the earth: many an inhabitant, who has now no existence: many a spot stocked with garden stuff, or with food for a *sheep*, a *hog*, or a *cow*, for the support of the husbandman, in addition to his labour. Thus in some places *five* families might be planted where there is now but *one*; and perhaps that *one*, drooping in *sordid poverty*, ignorance, and neglect of duty to God and man.

Many of us *complain* of this evil; others suppose it to be abundantly compensated by the magic word *improvement*, tho' no one pretends that our *morals* keep pace with such improvements; or that it produces numbers for *defence*. We challenge the *Scotch* for an immoderate national prejudice; and yet, if my accounts are true, the *Highlands* of *Scotland*, are much hurt by the same false *unpatriotic* ambition of the *Scotch* landlord.

We must comfort ourselves, that these are evils which in a great measure work their own cure. *Without virtue* we cannot exist long in any state;

state, and ~~with it~~ we may easily regain the advantage of this middle rank of gentry.

We all declare a fondness for *liberty*: were I to talk of *moderation*, even in our passion for this heavenly blessing, as essential to *virtue*, I might be contemned as an advocate for tyranny; but how few of us act, as if we were resolved to secure our liberty! We have the most admirable frame of government, and our laws are wonderfully calculated to prevent oppression: But if we mean to preserve ourselves, and generations to come, the father must cultivate the virtues, which he wishes to transmit to his son: He must recommend, by his example, such *customs* and *manners*, as are best calculated to maintain the integrity of individuals: the rest is *mock patriotism*, a *speculative* virtue, a *false pretence*, depending on humour or the rod of the magistrate.

That the *service of God* is perfect freedom, is as true in a *political*, as a *moral* sense; for *free government* is built on the foundation of religion. There needs no messenger from heaven to tell us, that as individuals we are but creatures of a day; but with regard to our duration as a nation, we should think with zeal of *That* which will give *stability to our country*, in the same manner as we meditate on those *obligations* which will secure our happiness as individuals, *after death*. We must maintain the cause of virtue both in theory and *practice*, or it will be impossible to make her our friend, and render her laws pleasing and familiar to us. I believe there is much solid merit still remaining amongst us: Let us *now* try if we can procure the patronage of the *great* and *powerful*, to further such designs as are *necessary* and practicable, and promise happiness to the public, upon the great principle of a *well-regulated police*.

If we view the out-lines of the history of the several nations of *Europe*, without looking farther back than the beginning of this century, we shall see the *folly of wars*, the ends of which have been defeated: the insecurity of peace, but from the *poverty* of nations: the depravity of *Christians*, in spite of the glorious precepts of the purity and humanity which the Gospel teaches. If we consider these things, we shall find, according to the
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wise king, "the ways of men, who live on the earth, can be controuled by nothing but *Omnipotence*," and that their wisdom is like the early dew which the sun drieth up. If we mean to be happy as a nation, we must make our ways "pleasing to God, by That *wisdom* whose seat is in equity and righteousness, and the execution of justice with an upright heart;" for let us go ever so deep into our subject, "the thoughts of mortal man," founded on any other principle, "are miserable, and their devices uncertain!"

Let you and I, my friend, do our best for the happiness of our country, and mankind, and leave the event to Heaven!—Let us be friends and allies to That moral and political rectitude which in all ages has preserved nations: Thus shall we engage divine Providence on our side, and if the immorality of fellow-subjects, intestine broils, or foreign wars, should at any period of our lives wound our country, or circumscribe her rank among the nations, still under the *best* or *worst* event, our conduct as individuals may be stamp'd with the *genuine* marks of *true patriotism*! Farewell.



T H E E N D.